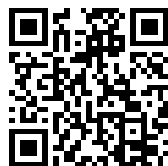

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THE INVISIBLE WEAPONS

THIS is the almost incredible story of a German who spent all the years of the war in an English Censor's Office. Though born in Germany, Dr. Silber had spent all his life abroad, mostly in South Africa, where he associated entirely with English people. He tells us that he spoke English better than German, and he was in every way sympathetic to the English, with the greatest admiration for her people, customs and methods of government. But when the War broke out, he suddenly realized his nationality, and he says, "In the country I had so long admired I now saw only an enemy, and that with a wholeheartedness which amazed me. I had never before known that love for one's country could be such a powerful factor in life."

Going straight to the War Office, he offered his services as a translator or interpreter, and by October 1914 he was in the Post Censor Office, first at Mount Pleasant and later in Salisbury House. There he had ample opportunity for getting news of value to Germany, and this he forwarded in the most ingenious ways. Soon he was moved to Liverpool. From there it was much more difficult for him to get letters forwarded, but again his remarkable ingenuity came to the rescue.

With the enforcement of Conscription he lived in daily fear of being called up, as his nationality would then have been revealed, but through his knowledge of medicine he was able to induce into himself symptoms which put him in too low a class for acceptance in the Army. All this time he was on the friendliest of terms with his fellow workers, but when eventually he was able to return to his own country in 1925 "his health was completely broken; not so much the great physical and nervous strain appearing to have affected him most, but a sort of spiritual agony of having to accept under false colours the hospitality and friendship of so many splendid people".

This book, written with reserve and modesty, makes extraordinarily interesting and thrilling reading. In the recital of his experiences the writer pays a remarkable tribute to British organization and power. It is the amazing story of how a man, playing a lone hand, and as fairly as possible under the circumstances, carried on his self-imposed mission from motives of patriotism.

THE INVISIBLE WEAPONS

by
Jules Crawford
J. C. Silber

With a foreword
by
Major-General
Edward Gleichen

London :
HUTCHINSON & CO.
(PUBLISHERS), LIMITED

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PRINTED IN
GREAT BRITAIN,
AT THE ANCHOR
PRESS, TIPTON,
:: ESSEX ::
1932

**TO
MY SISTER**

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOREWORD - - - - -	9
FATHERLAND - - - - -	11
"IMPERIUM BRITTANÆ" - - - - -	17
SECRET SERVICE - - - - -	23
THE TERRIBLE NET - - - - -	104
PROPAGANDA - - - - -	138
WAR SPIRIT AND CONSCRIPTION - - - - -	165
"U-BOATS" AND "Q-BOATS" - - - - -	216
THE LITTLE HELPERS - - - - -	238
THE FORSAKEN PEOPLE - - - - -	248
THE MIGHTY CONQUERORS - - - - -	264
FATHERLAND - - - - -	278



FOREWORD

MANY readers of this most interesting book may, very naturally, wish to have their suspicions allayed concerning the genuineness of the material here set forth. For their benefit it may be stated that, according to official records independently investigated by the present writer, an Assistant Censor named J. C. Silber was certainly borne on the books of the Postal Censorship from November 1914 to June 1919. Unfortunately, his personal papers have since been destroyed, so that further verification in detail is impossible. In addition to this confirmation the present writer has, in an interchange of letters with the German publishers, received from them an assurance of the absolute good faith of the author and, as far as they can tell, of the truth of his statements. They also add an expression of Herr Silber's appreciation of the kindness he received from his English colleagues, and of his regret at having had to resort to so much duplicity.

Regarding the facsimile letters on pages 177 and 275, it is only fair to the signatories to state that they were in no way responsible for Herr Silber's appointment in the first instance ; and it may be added that the head of the local censorship mentioned on page 183 was the Head of the local Censorship in Liverpool and not the Head of the Service in London.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Edward Gleichen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Major General.

July, 1932.

The Invisible Weapons

FATHERLAND

ON the outbreak of the Great War, many thousand Germans of military age living in the United States streamed down to the coastal cities in order to get home as quickly as possible, but it was too late. The blockading measures immediately taken by the Allies had made their return to their native country almost impossible.

The catastrophe that had so unexpectedly befallen Germany had aroused me from the indifference with which I had hitherto regarded its political affairs and fortunes. I felt myself suddenly bound to the country which, though I scarcely knew it, was my native land, and I was carried away by a passionate, irresistible urge to serve it, now that it was in need. After careful consideration of all ways and means by which I might, perhaps, be most useful, I resolved to go to England and there serve Germany as an intelligence officer. My means were sufficient for such a plan and it seemed to me a practical possibility. I had spent nearly all my life abroad, and from

early youth had been familiar with conditions in the English-speaking world.

From my Silesian home, I went to South Africa, where, still almost a boy, I had had nobody but myself to turn to and had lived there a hard, but happy youth. In Africa I had long since learnt to speak English even better than my mother tongue, and was also thoroughly conversant with the language of the Boers, the "Taal", a sort of Dutch, as well as with that of the Zulus.

I had intended to become a medical man, when the outbreak of the Boer War gave my life an entirely new turn.

In the midst of the South African troubles, and as eye-witness of the struggles of the Boers, I had received, at the time, the most lasting impression of the power of the British Empire and of its far-sighted policy. Even during the War measures were taken to win the friendship of the defeated enemy. I had particularly good opportunities of learning to appreciate this sound and shrewd policy in the course of my employment as English interpreter in internment camps of the captured Boers and as censorship official. No one in those days had troubled about my German nationality.

When, during the War, about 15,000 Boer prisoners of war were sent to India, I, as one of several other political and censorship officials, went along with them and remained in that land

of a thousand wonders for a year and a half, one of the happiest periods of my life.

In addition to the censorship of letters, the correct translation of all orders and regulations into the Boer language, and our interpreting work for courts martial, we had the special task assigned to us of holding suitable political lectures so as to create a conciliatory atmosphere among the prisoners of war.

After a short period of duty in Ceylon and Bombay I was ordered to the new prisoners' camp in Kakool in the Punjab, where a detachment of the 2nd Battalion of the King's Royal Rifle Corps, one of the crack regiments of the British Army, acted as guard, and here I came to appreciate to the full the value of the military and sporting life in India. The Englishman is the pleasantest of companions. He is quiet and reserved ; where others push themselves forward he keeps himself in the background with that well-bred modesty which in reality is the essence of a deeply seated pride. As an acquaintance, a friend, a comrade, he is the very embodiment of that ideal of personal behaviour which has become a household word over the world—the gentleman.

Our duties in Kakool were simple, and could usually be completed in the course of a few hours in the morning. In the neighbouring town of Abbottabad, a small but well garrisoned station

near the Afghan frontier, club life and sport gave us plenty of distraction. On days when we were not on duty we went shooting or made excursion through the romantic mountain-passes and beautiful surrounding country.

When the peace of Vereeniging was signed we had to explain its conditions to the Boer prisoners and inform them that they now had become British subjects. They had to sign a very simply worded declaration of allegiance, and were then drafted home as quickly as possible. This brought my duties to an end, and so I, too, returned to South Africa.

In those kaleidoscopic years I not only received a vivid impression of English methods in war and peace, but I also became an enthusiastic and ardent admirer of this people which I saw covering the world in giant strides : I admired its considered adroitness, its unshakable purpose, and these qualities seemed to me so to justify the power of the British Empire that many an action, in itself inexcusable, seemed as a political necessity both easy to understand and to justify.

This friendship for Britain remained when, shortly afterwards, I migrated to the United States, where I succeeded in making a comfortable fortune after some years of hard work.

Then came the summer of 1914. England was now Germany's most dangerous enemy. I found

myself surprised by my own utter feeling of hostility towards the land I had admired so long. Up to then I had never realized how deeply patriotism can affect us.

Those who from their very cradle have taken their native country for granted, as part of their natural surroundings, are scarcely in a position to realize how much it can mean to one who has grown up far from home and for whom home is only a dim concept. The knowledge that my country was no ordinary one must also have affected me subconsciously. I felt pleased whenever somebody spoke of Germany's power and worth, and had always instinctively refused any suggestion that I should change my nationality. Beyond this I had never thought much about Germany, nor even made any attempt to get into touch with my compatriots. Africa had been the land of my youth and America that of my manhood, and all my interests had brought me into touch with other nations.

Now, however, a tremendous awakening thrust all other feelings into the background, and only the knowledge that I was German and belonged to Germany remained. I at once got into touch with the German Embassy in Washington and, full of enthusiasm, proceeded with the preparations for my plan. It was indescribably glorious to feel that one had a Fatherland which could use

16 THE INVISIBLE WEAPONS

one's services—to feel that I need not stand aside from the gigantic struggle just beginning. The certainty that this would be a titanic combat was guaranteed by the entry into the war of the British Empire with its vast resources and its quality, which the world had got to know only too well, of grim resolve to achieve any object it had set itself.

“IMPERIUM BRITANNÆ”

ON the German side, too, it has been repeatedly affirmed that our greatest mistake before the War was to underestimate our opponents. Had it not been for our profound and general misunderstanding of the most essential international conditions, opinions and motives, especially in the English-speaking world, our policy would certainly not have driven England to alliances which racially went against the grain.

We Germans, when we speak of “England”, are too prone to think only of the little neighbouring island, rather isolated, very aristocratic, attractive, but somewhat strange to a Continental, and in any case far smaller in size and population than ourselves ; and we often forget the British Empire, of which this island is certainly the heart and Motherland, but of which, viewed objectively, it is only a tiny portion, scarcely more than a hundredth part of the whole territory. But the British Empire is a colossus, so mighty and predominant that nothing to equal it can be found in ancient or modern history. Not one of the kingdoms of the past, not even that oft-cited parallel, the *Imperium Romanum*, nor the young American

Republic, for all its possible future greatness, can compare in extent and strongly crowded might with that British Empire which seems so loose a conglomeration of states, yet is with deep psychological insight so skilfully knit into such powerful a unit.

He who knows England knows also that not even the recent financial crisis of the summer of 1931 could shake this mighty construction to its base.

Most significant, most perilous for outsiders, more formidable than the extent of the Empire, is the love which the colonies bear the Motherland, an influence which London knows how to foster and preserve, and can use if need be against other nations. London has discovered the art of taking a personal share in the domestic interests of each and every colony and dominion. The British warship which drops anchor in a colonial port is not considered as an irritating form of control, but welcomed as a visitor from home. She comes as the messenger of the English people to their British brothers in the dominions. Anyone who wants to see the ship is shown round and entertained as a welcome guest. On both sides these good relationships are fostered and kept alive, since unity alone brings power. The old fable of the twigs which, singly, were easy enough to break, but resisted every effort when tied together,

is here revealed as an established and proven fact. A simple fable which, to our cost, we Germans have always failed to understand. Just as we, to whom the bearing of arms and universal military service are tradition, had never quite realized that other weapons besides strength and defiance of death are needed to win wars. These qualities alone had carried us from victory to victory—victories which, in spite of all, will still be called so by our children and our children's children. There are other nations, however, which have placed equal value on subtler weapons: the clever enmeshing of a foe, the study of the foreigners' mentality and the art of letting the enemy wear himself out. With such weapons as these they have won their victories.

England surpasses all other races and peoples in such matters. Her enmity would be dangerous even if it were only that of the island kingdom in the North Sea. As the brain and soul of the British giant, however, she becomes a very formidable adversary. In every continent she can oppose her rivals and competitors: wherever these may have found their livelihood, British preponderance and British influence are ready at any time to destroy them utterly.

Colonel House, the clever right-hand man of President Wilson, who visited Europe shortly before the War to obtain first-hand knowledge

of the condition of Inter-European politics, described the far-flung might and the secret but terrible pressure which Britain can exert at any given moment in the following plain words :

“Whenever England consents, France and Russia will close in on Germany and Austria. . . .”

Whenever England consents !

How far this English preponderance could affect the destiny of the world was disastrously apparent when, at the outset of the War, competition began for the favour of the only Power of real importance among the neutrals—America. The influence of the German-Americans on which we had been placing so much hope had never in reality existed. True, about eight per cent of the population were German or of German descent ; but they were mainly hard-working craftsmen, industrious shopkeepers, or small farmers in the middle-western States. Everywhere they were respected. In certain sections of the country this good solid German element played a considerable part in local affairs, but the national policy was entirely controlled by the Anglo-Saxon part of the American community, so firmly bound to the one time Motherland by social ties and business interests.

It was therefore a matter of course that the British Embassy played the chief part among the foreign representatives in Washington. On the

outbreak of War the British Embassy in Washington could count on the most precise instructions direct from London ; the staff was reinforced by the ablest men in England ; whereas the German Ambassador, Count Bernstorff, although he was a clever and able diplomat, found himself cut off entirely from his government, and surrounded only by such a staff as sufficed for ordinary peacetime requirements. German foreign policy was tied hand and foot right from the very start.

But the English had a free hand and were in a position to unfold all their skill, supported by the extraordinary inner unity of a body of peoples with whom it is a matter of tradition that none goes back on any single member nor fears to be sacrificed by any. The saying : “Right or wrong, my country !” although it has been coined in America, is nevertheless old English tradition. There is something in this challenge which forces respect.

Perhaps this mutual support is the deepest reason for the unexampled success of England, the never-failing certainty with which she follows out her purposes, and conducts her international policy with a skill which has often proved worth more than any army. For the island kingdom was never a military state.

Even in the Great War it was some time before England sent a large force of troops to the

continent. But from the very start she set three huge organizations against us which weighed down on us like invisible fetters, robbing us of our freedom of movement, of the very breath of life : a wonderfully conducted secret service, which often knew our plans before we had fully shaped them ; a blockade informed by a splendid postal censorship which controlled every market of the world, and registered the sentiments and thoughts of both friend and foe ; and a cunningly thought out propaganda, which not only aroused the hatred of the whole world against us, but managed to creep into our very armies and rotted the morale even of Germans at home.

SECRET SERVICE

It took me some weeks to make my preparations for the duties I proposed to undertake. As yet I had no clear view of their future requirements and possibilities. I buried myself in a mass of military and naval technical literature and tried, as well as I could in the short time at my disposal, to get a general idea of all branches of warfare, so that later I might judge as quickly as possible the importance or otherwise of a report.

August slipped away. The news in the papers grew wilder and wilder. Americans who had been surprised in Europe by the outbreak of War came home to report sensational details. True or false, they made a deep impression. Everywhere excitement flared up and grew into a sort of hysteria, which quickly spread all over the States. Dimly one could sense the beginnings of a terrible, but most skilfully managed, campaign of mass-suggestion. The general opinion was still sure that the War would not last long. In the first week of September, however, at a dinner given by some acquaintances, I heard the then senior general of the United States army, General Miles, express the opinion which afterwards was repeated by

Lord Kitchener : "This war will last more than three years." The words brought a chill breath of horror ; but most of those present were incredulous and soon had shaken off the feeling. A war which had begun with such appalling violence, and which hurled such masses of men and material into action, must soon end for lack of both. Only a few were clear-sighted enough to see that Germany's worst enemy was the at-present half-quiescent England ; only a minority perceived that England would make full use of this opportunity to rid herself of her strongest competitor, or realized her genius for organization, whose noiseless and invisible working would bring not a few surprises in the course of the next few weeks or months.

Communication with Europe had in the meantime become more and more difficult. All liners bound for Holland, Scandinavia or the Mediterranean countries were stopped off the European coasts by the warships of the Allies, or forced to put into the nearest harbour of the Allies, where they were carefully searched for any contraband of war, and especially for German passengers of military age. Anyone unable to prove himself a citizen of a neutral country was carried off without ceremony to the nearest concentration camp. The direct traffic between the United States and England was just as strictly watched. Again and again ships were forced to carry back passengers,

gratis, whose entry into England had for various reasons been refused. The shipping companies therefore tried to protect themselves by demanding the production of a valid passport from every would-be passenger before they consented to issue travelling tickets.

Up to the outbreak of the War one had been accustomed to travel in the English-speaking world with ease and comfort without red-tape or formalities of any sort. Nobody had ever bothered about passports or police identification cards, and yet the apprehension of any person "wanted" had always worked to perfection, especially in England.

I myself had never had a passport ; my other papers had always been quite sufficient. Suddenly this had all been altered, and to sail from New York or leave Boston or Philadelphia without a passport (which would, of course, have betrayed my nationality) had become completely out of the question.

The only remaining possibility was to leave for England from some port in Canada. From there communication with the Motherland, even if it was not very speedy, was in any case fairly regular and constant, and the control exercised was less strict since Canadians were British subjects. This state of affairs was, however, liable to be changed at any minute, and much as I should have liked to have taken more time for my preparations,

could delay no longer before setting out for my goal. My business affairs had already been wound up ; I had realized my fortune, and was thus in a position to leave at a moment's notice.

Montreal on the St. Lawrence, the most important city in the Canadian province of Quebec, was my first stopping place in enemy country. A crowd of young officers busy showing off in their new uniforms, a few recruiting posters which most people in the passing crowds scarcely seemed to notice, were the only indications that this country was affected by the World-War.

However, I was now on British soil and could therefore no longer avoid the necessity of wiping out my present identity. This was a side of my new undertaking which brought me into a sharp and bitter spiritual conflict, leaving behind wounds that can never heal. It was absolutely essential and yet it went against the grain, and I began to realize more and more that this was not merely a service inviting, perhaps, by its boldness, but rather that it might turn out to be a thorny path which would have to be fought over at the cost of the last reserves of determination. I thought, however, and still think, that one's country's necessity which legalizes murder can also make deception honourable.

I kept my name, since the only papers which I could always produce without fear or danger to

myself were references to my activities in South Africa and India. These were valuable aids to my plan of obtaining a position in some department of the British War Office, since the fact that I was a German subject was luckily mentioned in none of them.

As I should have to enter England as a British subject, I decided that Canada and the province of Quebec were the best adoptive home that I could choose for my purpose. In this way it would be easier to explain my object in visiting England, and my desire to be given a post in the War Office. I stuck to the axiom that in difficult situations one should avoid lengthy and complicated explanations. I came from a port in Quebec, was conversant to some extent with the dialect of that province, whose inhabitants were mostly of French origin, and my outward appearance was in conformity with the prevailing brunette type. With these meagre evidences of nationality I had to stand or fall. On a journey from the dominion to the Motherland, my lack of a passport could probably be excused by the usual pre-War carelessness in such matters.

I hoped in any case to be able to leave Montreal without any trouble. But at the offices of the shipping companies I was very much perturbed to find that already, even there, all sorts of passport formalities were to be gone through before they

would consent to sell tickets for a cabin to England. In the end I managed to find a freighter which served a regular line from Canada to Manchester, and which sometimes took passengers. My small dark beard, cut in French style, may perhaps have made them think that I was a Frenchman looking for a chance of returning home as cheaply as possible ; they gave me the last of three cabins on a comparatively small vessel which left Montreal on September 19, 1914.

During the voyage I was therefore forced to play the part they had assigned to me. I was the first of the passengers to go on board, and I chose the best of the three cabins and found it surprisingly well equipped, even down to its having a writing-desk. A thickset officer in civilian clothes, with a face like a bulldog—I found out later that he was the captain—gave me a quick glance out of the corner of his eye and then ceased to take any further interest in me.

Only next morning, as we steamed down the St. Lawrence River, did I get to know the two other passengers. One, a very nice fellow, a mining engineer about thirty years old, who was going back to England to join the Royal Engineers, the other a tall fair-haired, blue-eyed American, ex-captain of the New York ice-hockey team (which is saying a great deal for his sporting accomplishments), was very reserved and read very

good books. On one occasion he mentioned casually that he was an employee in a bank, and was taking his annual holiday in Europe so as to be able to see what England and France looked like under war conditions. It may have been true perhaps ; or he may have believed me about as much as I believed him.

In accordance with instructions issued by the British Admiralty, which kept a sharp control even on the smallest vessels and liners, we had to keep a rather northerly course and so met only one ship during the whole voyage, a vessel of our own line, making the return voyage to Canada. In spite of this, every possible precaution was taken during the ten-days run : at night on deck only the absolutely essential lights were shown and even the windows of our tiny cabins were carefully curtained.

Since our crew (including the three passengers) did not reach the number of fifty persons, we carried no wireless, which in those days was compulsory only for great liners. We were thus completely cut off from the world. This only increased the excitement and nervous tension of all, and our sole topic of conversation was the War. The ship's officers were easy to get on with, and soon our mutual interest in chess had made me friends with the captain, with whom I played many a game. To avoid unnecessary questions I showed him my collection of snapshots taken in

India and South Africa, and when he had seen the pictures of myself with the other officers of the Kakool garrison he seemed much more at ease with me, and certainly thought me anything but a German.

On the evening of the ninth day out—we were then just off the north coast of Ireland—the ship lay to. We left our dinner and all ran up on deck to see the shadowy outline of a British cruiser passing slowly between us and the land. Morse signals flashed with the usual questions: “Who are you?” “Where are you bound?” “From what port?” and were answered by us in the same manner. I knew the Morse code and could therefore understand what followed. “Have you any enemy aliens on board?” “War” pounded my heart, and it was a great relief to see the answering “No”. After a few more short instructions we were allowed to proceed; the coastline disappeared and the cruiser also vanished into the night.

The following afternoon, shortly before entering the port of Liverpool, we took the pilot on board and with him the first newspapers we had seen for some ten days. The first news—and what news! Three English cruisers, the *Aboukir*, the *Hogue*, and the *Cressy* had been sunk in the Bight of Heligoland by a German submarine. How I would have liked to cheer at this successful naval exploit!

In Liverpool we remained at anchor in mid-stream so that the shipping company should not have to pay the heavy harbour dues imposed if passengers were landed in Liverpool. The harbour commandant's steam pinnace came alongside, and the officer shouted through a megaphone : "Have you enemy aliens on board ?" "No. One Englishman, one American, and a Frenchman," was the answer. The next day we steamed through the Manchester Ship Canal, with its numerous locks. Sentries with fixed bayonets were posted at all points along it where an attempt of sabotage on the canal might be made. War was to be seen and heard everywhere. We dropped anchor at last in Manchester, and after a very cursory customs examination, had a visit from the far more dangerous port authorities.

The instant War broke out a very close control had been arranged at all ports on persons entering or leaving the United Kingdom. The officials responsible for this, the "Aliens Officers", were in permanent touch with the Home Office in London, so that any arrivals of whom the authorities were uncertain, but who nevertheless could not well be prevented from landing, were at once reported to a special department in London and watched wherever they went. As soon as he came on board the Aliens Officer lodged a complaint that the captain should have taken passengers at all : the

port of Manchester had been closed for all passenger traffic. The captain energetically disclaimed all responsibility, laying the blame on his company's office in Montreal, which had not fully informed him of these facts. It so happened that one of us three passengers, the mining engineer, was a Lancashire man, whose accent unquestionably vouched for him. He was allowed to land. The American showed his passport, which lacked a photograph : a few weeks later he would never have got out of the United States with it. Since he could neither be classed as an enemy nor British subject, the Home Office had to be consulted before he was allowed to land. I was worse off than the others, since I had no passport at all. The officer was not inclined to believe that this simple deficiency made me harmless, and subjected me to a severe cross-questioning. Once more I brought out my photographs, which showed me plainly as a member of the Kakool garrison, and this seemed to appease the authorities. But I, too, was ordered to remain on board until such time as the Home Office should have wired its decision.

Scarcely had these officials left the ship than our fuming little captain, antagonized by the self-importance of these newly-appointed Aliens Officers, told us that this form of arrest was nothing but a bit of red tape and that he himself granted us full permission to go on land as much

as ever we pleased—just to show the idiots what he thought of them ! He wrote us out passes available up till nine o'clock in the evening, and, of course, we did not need to be told twice. We felt like truants, had a look at the city and dined at the Midland Hotel, where they gave us an excellent meal at a ridiculously low price judged by American standards. We got back to our ship punctually at nine o'clock, only to run straight into the arms of the enraged Aliens Officer, who received us with the threat to have us arrested at once for having disobeyed his orders. In view of our passes, signed by the captain, which put all the onus on the shoulders of that scornfully amused officer, he quieted down and at last grudgingly informed us that permission for us to land had arrived from London.

It was nearly ten o'clock, and an express left for London at midnight. I therefore said good-bye to my fellow-travellers, had my luggage taken to the station, fancied myself closely scrutinized by every policeman on the platform, and at last, with a sigh of relief, found myself in an empty compartment of the midnight express. The guard understood the chinking sound of the universal language of all travellers and locked the door so that I should not be disturbed. Opposite my seat there were two placards : an order to keep all windows closed and the blinds down and a warning not to

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speak of military matters since it was impossible to know who was listening. I went to sleep resolved to take this last notice very much to heart.

The train reached London at dawn. The station was empty. A thin fog hung over the sleeping city, which seemed very peaceful and cosy ; so different from New York, where the raucous roar of the day's work echoes through the night till in the early morning hours it begins to gain in volume.

My first care was to find a quiet suitable flat, to avoid at once the migratory appearance of hotel-life, and give at least the suggestion of being a resident in London. I could have given so few valid reasons to account for my presence in London, and my real designs were built on such slender and uncertain foundations that I could never have sustained a close and mistrustful enquiry. The least carelessness or most fleeting and intangible wrong impression might have jeopardized the whole success of my mission. I soon found what I sought : two rooms with a bathroom, self-contained, in a corner house in the Charing Cross Road, not precisely of the best class, but certainly clean, comfortable and ideally situated. From my windows I looked down on Cambridge Circus, which was filled with traffic during the day. People hurried and jostled, to all appearances at peace with the world. Extraordinarily few uniforms were to be seen. The public-houses were

overcrowded. Was this country really at war? No, war for England had always been, and probably always will be, somewhere else ! It was directed from here, and from here all the wires were pulled ; there was an ever-increasing activity and movement : but wherever I went and wherever I looked, I found the same magnificent calm, the same perfect intellectual balance and quiet routine of commerce, the same control of all matters pertaining to daily life—that “business as usual”, unshakable by the greatest of human tragedies.

The days that followed recur now to haunt my dreams.

Among the many auxiliary organizations attached to the War Office at that time, the Censorship Department on the whole best suited my purpose. This office was not merely entrusted with the inspection of all news before it reached the public and Press, but was, above all, in sole charge of the entire telegraphic and postal correspondence both in and out of the country. The censorship, therefore, was in itself an unrivalled source of information, while at the same time, if skilful use were made of what information it might yield and I could gather, it offered me an opportunity of passing on such information to Germany as quickly and conveniently as possible.

With all the certainty of a sleepwalker able to traverse the most dangerous places where the

slightest false step means death, I went straight to the War Office and asked for an interview with the head of the personnel department of the military censorship. My knowledge that, once the first step had been taken, my path must be followed to the end, had such a power of suggestion over me that I really almost believed the story I had carefully thought out before taking it. In the outer office I was one of a crowd of applicants all hoping for some kind of post. Lean, sharp-cut faces, tanned by the sun and winds of the tropics, most probably men who had seen service in the colonies to whom this war meant yet another adventure and one which must on no account be missed: among them fresh-faced youngsters who clearly could not exchange the university for the front quickly enough, and who hoped to get a commission as dispatch riders. I was admitted without undue delay, and at once subjected to an examination by Major X, whose suspicions had been aroused by my name, the sound of which was neither French nor English. When he discovered from my papers that I had been years before in the British service in both South Africa and India, he seemed provisionally satisfied with my statements that I came from the province of Quebec and by my knowledge of conditions there.

I was given an application form to fill up containing a searching list of questions to answer, and

told that I must hand these in, together with copies of my documents, for I was unable to give any other references. I took these papers back with me to the flat, where I could consider the answers at leisure. I cannot precisely remember the different questions, but they were certainly calculated to elicit a comprehensive statement about the person applying for a post.

On my way home I saw in a bookseller's window a copy of the latest edition of the *Manual of Emergency Legislation* which had come into force at the outbreak of the War (being later expanded into *The Defence of the Realm Act*, called "Dora" for short). I bought a copy, and as I looked through it I came to the conclusion that there was no expression of life which might not be construed as an offence against the new Acts. Heartened and refreshed by these studies, I filled in my questionnaire as fully as possible and took it to the War Office that same afternoon, where I handed it back to Major X himself. After glancing through it he informed me that since I seemed to have some knowledge of economics I should probably not be sent to the front as an interpreter, but most probably be given a job in the postal censorship in London on the strength of my experience during the Boer War. I was dismissed with the remark that I should hear in due course if my services would be required. I left his office,

and seemed to feel his sharp scrutiny boring into my back all the way home.

Then came a time of waiting. Endless days of hope and doubt, full of tense excitement and sudden fear of some swift inevitable retribution. Had my case already been disposed of whilst I remained in blissful ignorance? In a special department of the famous Scotland Yard, under the direction of Mr. Thompson—later Sir Basil Thompson—the applications of all persons who wished to work in positions of trust in the new departments attached to the War Office, the Admiralty, the Foreign Office, or any other of the ministries, were being carefully scrutinized. The work was done very thoroughly, and cable and telegraph played on the slightest suspicion. Would they make enquiries in my fictitious birthplace, and whether my family in Canada really existed? Had they looked up the original records relating to my service in South Africa and India, which must certainly be somewhere in the War Office archives, and so found out that I was a German, a fact not mentioned in the various testimonials and certificates? Or could I hope that the troubles and commotions attendant on such a time as this would prevent their going into the matter so fully and thus offer the only chance I had to slip through this tight-meshed net, at least for the time being?

My luck, which had favoured me up to now,

continued to hold. One morning I received an order in writing to report at Salisbury House (a huge block of buildings near the Bank of England, where the entire postal censorship had been housed in order to relieve the General Post Office at Mount Pleasant), to the Colonel, the head of the Censor's Department for all correspondence with neutral countries. Punctually at ten o'clock I sent in my card and was admitted to his small private office. This officer had formerly commanded a Punjabi regiment in India, had then been attached to the General Staff, and had retired only a short time before. On his reporting for further duty when War broke out, he had been temporarily given this important post in the censorship. He had my papers in front of him and at once began to talk about India. Since I still knew a little Urdu, and remembered a number of people he had known there, the ice was quickly broken. He was a very charming and clever man, whose pleasantly put questions almost made me fail to realize that he was very adroitly putting me through a sort of examination, in the course of which he turned me inside out, discovering and proving for himself all the facts he wanted to know about my past, my attainments, and previous employment in India and South Africa. His friendly tone, however, assuaged to a great extent the nervous tension under which I laboured.

Two days later, on October 12, 1914, I was ordered by the Colonel's office to report myself for duty. I was given a little pass, which identified me as a member of the department of the postal censorship and gave me access to that part of the building in which the censorship offices were situated. The number of this pass was 216. A few days later I received from the War Office the official notice of my appointment as an examiner.

First I was made acquainted with my duties. The routine had been carefully worked out, was very strictly adhered to, and seemed to present no loophole through which news could percolate. It was forbidden to speak to any person whatsoever about the nature of one's employment, while as to the contents of any letters and documents which passed through our hands, only our superior officers were to be consulted.

I was shown into a large hall where about eighty men were sitting at long tables opening letters, reading them and closing them again with small labels on which their identity numbers were printed.

An officer was in charge of each table and sat at the head of it. I was introduced to one of these superintendents, a Major Z. He showed me where to sit, gave me the necessary materials, taught me the very simple routine which I must follow when dealing with the letters, explaining, however, in great detail what subjects were most

important at the moment in those which would pass through my hands.

Several names were written on a large black-board which hung on the wall, plainly visible, and we had to keep a sharp look out for any mention of these in the letters we read. The names were those of persons suspected of sending secret information to Germany via neutral countries. In addition, a short sentence was scribbled up on this board: "Johnson is ill". The Admiralty knew that somewhere in England a German officer was travelling about who intended to use this formula to convey the news of certain movements of the British fleet. He unfortunately underestimated the precautionary measures of the English, and probably did not know that all letters addressed to neutral countries were subjected to a rigorous censorship. He had already been located and was being watched; the authorities were only awaiting this last letter as the final link in their chain of evidence against him and one which would establish the identity of his correspondent abroad. A few days after my arrival the sentence on the board was rubbed out. The letter had been found: the writer was court-martialled and shot after a brief trial.

A brave man and a lonely death. I should like here to touch on a sore point and speak of the opinion unfortunately so rife, in Germany

especially, which has often robbed these solitary victims of their greatest solace in face of death—the knowledge that their countrymen would appreciate that they, too, had given their all and best. The man who enters the secret service of his country knows well that he must live in nerve-racking isolation in the midst of his enemies and die without a murmur if he is caught. Great care should therefore be taken that the service as such be duly respected, and especially never be confused with the paid treachery of the man who sells his country. It is absurd to rate the secret service as one not quite fit for men of honour, because it demands—like all strategy, like the tactics which led to a great victory at Tannenberg—the deception of the enemy. Precisely this necessity and these circumstances call for spiritual courage. It is unwise to allow a stigma to rest upon this essential branch and so deprive it of some of the best men. Other nations are more logically-minded and see the matter more justly.

England, ever worldly-wise, considers the secret service as a duty for which the very best brains, and strongest and cleanest characters, are only just good enough, and has brought it to a pitch of perfection which wrought terrible havoc during the War. We in Germany felt its crushing effects but did not always realize from which source they originated. Our foible for underestimating the

essential and valuable characteristics of foreign peoples is just as old as our tendency of admiring them for achievements of an unimportant or ephemeral nature. Probably the gravest mistake ever made in the War was that we saw our great English enemy, his unerring will to victory, his coldly ruthless policy toward that one end, through the lens of our own wishes and desires. This mistake was the most fatal of the many and seemingly ineradicable blunders in German policy.

The overwhelming superiority of the English secret service was one of my first impressions as I entered on my duties in the censorship. In face of this mighty organization, perfected down to its last detail, any attempt to work against it seemed amateurish and futile. In addition, England was not hemmed in in any way and was able to use all channels of communication, whereas we, isolated and cut off from the rest of the world, could only get news through with the greatest difficulty and often fatal loss of time. Germany by now could only communicate freely with the neighbouring neutral states. Further afield all news, either written or telegraphed, was caught up by the huge tentacles of British control and fed to the maw of the Censor.

All that thousands and thousands of educated and often surprisingly well informed people in every continent wrote to each other poured in a

wild stream through our office. Enough material came into my hands every day to have kept me busy all day long transmitting it to Germany : but even from the privileged Censor's Office the ways and means of sending it on quickly were few and difficult to negotiate, so that only very little could be used. The longer the War lasted the harder it was. Many a valuable piece of information had to be neglected because it would have taken five or six days to send it to the authorities at home, and by that time events would have rendered it useless. In the beginning I was able to send my news in a very simple manner to the innocent-looking addresses in Berlin and Kiel given to me in Washington. Very often letters came to be censored which were addressed to neutral countries, but which contained the request that a few words of a purely personal character should be sent on to some address or other in Germany.

Since this seemed to show that the writer knew that his correspondent had German sympathies I would enclose in all such letters a small envelope of my own containing the information I wished to send, and addressed to the person whose name I had been given in Washington, adding an international postage coupon to cover the cost of postage, seal the letter according to instructions, and let it go. The first piece of information I sent in this way was a copy of the

"Suspects List" with which every censorship official had been provided, and which contained all the names and addresses of people in neutral countries known to the British as conveyors of news to Germany, so that the authorities at home could replace these compromised addresses by others.

For a short time I was employed in censoring the letters of German prisoners of war, which had accumulated to an alarming extent, chiefly because they had been held back for military reasons. Here was a welcome opportunity : these letters, which went straight to Germany, could much more easily and less dangerously be used to include messages for Berlin. Unluckily, this work was soon over and I was sent back to my original section. In the meantime I had made the acquaintance of a Colonel Y, who had to deal with the daily post from the internment camps. Through this officer I heard much that was extremely interesting and a great deal more that I very deeply regretted. The letters for the prisoners of war from their friends and relations in Germany were dealt with by a special department, where they were carefully examined. Unfortunately they often contained military and political news from Germany which was of great value to England. Once Colonel Y, with a laugh, told me of a young German girl in regular correspondence with her sweetheart, who had been taken

prisoner. Her letters gave him news of the movements of all the troops in her neighbourhood, and as "a precaution" she used an invisible ink which a child could have detected. This simple-minded girl apparently imagined herself very clever indeed, and was probably certain that nobody else had ever thought of invisible ink. In England, all the valuable information contained in her letters was carefully noted and the military authorities took great care not to discourage her correspondence which afforded them such precious data as to the movements of German troops.

In the course of time I became more and more proficient in sifting out the valuable items from the mass of information that came to my knowledge, and no longer needed to waste the scanty means of communication at my disposal in sending news of secondary importance. The volume of information increased, however, to such an extent that it was impossible to dispose of my material in writing. It took too long to relate important and often complicated details, not to mention the danger involved in including large and heavy envelopes in other letters addressed to Germany via neutral countries. In the end it also became impossible to take notes too often of important data under the eyes of my colleagues, while there was far too much variety in what I learned to permit my relying on my memory, and thus

running the risk of making mistakes which would have destroyed the value of my reports. It became necessary, therefore, to equip a small photographic studio with a dark room as near my flat as possible, where I might work in peace at night without too much risk of being discovered. After a long search I managed to find the very thing I was looking for in a small tumbledown house in the Haymarket.

This house has been pulled down since and replaced by another. On the ground floor there was a sadler's shop, above it a ladies' hairdresser's, and the second floor contained a small furnished flat consisting of one bed-sitting room, a hall, a kitchen and a large bathroom. The latter was what I needed most, since I could use it as a dark-room for developing. The owner of the flat took care to find out that I really was employed in Salisbury House, accepted the six months' rent in advance, and then graciously handed her kingdom over to me. At night I was the only person in the whole building, and nobody took any notice of when I arrived or went. The troublesome copying out of my notes which had taken so long could now be avoided. Important lists, documents, and letters, as well as my own reports, were photographed on a tiny scale, and I was thus able to confine all my information to the smallest possible space. To the relative

security of these rooms I also bit by bit removed all the books of military and naval information I had to consult, and in time I had accumulated there quite a miniature reference library.

In my official diggings in St. Margaret's Street, which of course I still retained for sleeping and living, I had to be particularly careful that no special notice was taken of the fact that I was so often out at night. Since I knew how interested landladies usually are in the doings of those who rent their rooms, and that sometimes they are even not above looking through a lodger's personal belongings during his absence, I made a habit of buying theatre and concert tickets almost every day and then leaving the counterfoils lying about on the floor. I could thus be tolerably certain that my landlady would of her own accord tell anyone who made enquiries about my private life that I was a keen music-lover and theatre-goer, whose leisure hours were spent in relaxations in every way respectable. This actually did happen some time afterwards.

Danger and circumspection had become my two inseparable companions, and by now they had grown to be habitual. One acquires under these conditions a scent for danger like an animal, and learns intuitively how to deal with apparently innocent questions put to try one out, and to avoid or skate swiftly over the patches of thin ice in

general conversation. Such disguised cross-examinations were fairly frequent at first, since my name aroused a certain interest on more than one occasion.

On the morning of my return from the department for prisoners' of war mail to my original section, I noticed that from one or other of the tables several of the staff were being called singly into an inner room. They took all their materials with them and remained away for a few days. "Control" !—the realization came to me like a flash. Sending through reports was naturally stopped until the control should be over.

Shortly after this a letter came into my hands which had been sent to the censorship by mistake, since it was addressed to Canada, which, as a British Dominion, was not yet subjected to supervision. In spite of this I opened it. A married woman had written to her relations informing them that her husband, employed in the Vickers works, was now busy day and night on the armoured cruiser *Invincible*, and might have to go with the ship to the Falkland Islands if the repairs were not finished by the day the ship had to sail.

This seemed unimportant enough : but it was at the time that Count Spee had destroyed the British squadron under Admiral Craddock, and the general opinion was that Spee would try to reach the Atlantic Ocean through the Straits of Magellan

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past the Falkland Islands. A comparison between the tonnage, speed, and range of the *Invincible* and the flagship of Count Spee's squadron, which I was able to find in my books of reference, left me in no doubt that the English were trying to cut off Count Spee with overwhelming odds. The news went to Germany by several different routes as well as to a pre-arranged American address—but by post. The hope that it would arrive in time for Count Spee to be warned was very slight. England's control of the means of communication worked well !

Sometimes the correspondence would reveal what was best and loveliest in human nature. There were, for instance, letters a girl of about twenty wrote to her fiancé in Italy who intended shortly to return to England to join the army. She wrote very naturally, yet with so rare a tenderness and grace in the lovely rushes of her phrases, charged with the true poetry of affection, that her letters wove a magic spell about us and made us forget for the moment the bitterness and hatred abroad in the world. She little dreamed that strangers would read her pages, but the awe with which they were read did not, I am sure, profane them. They formed a spiritual link between those into whose hands they came. When, in one letter, the wedding-day was named, we could not resist the desire to send this rare and delightful being a

small present, the source of which she would never learn.

Christmas 1914 ! What mockery there was in the Christmas message "Peace and good will on earth." Our men out there in mud and ice and the lonely families at home ! How long would it last ? Depressed and discouraged I wandered through the darkened street, past the hurrying crowds laden with their Christmas parcels. A more desolate Christmas than this I was sure I would never have. Fool that I was !

One morning in February 1915 as the servant brought me my breakfast she mentioned that I was no longer the only tenant on the floor : a young lady had taken the room next to mine. I paid very little attention to this. That evening, however, when I had come home, late as usual, there was a knock at my door. I opened it and saw to my astonishment the new tenant, who asked me, with many apologies for disturbing me at so late an hour, to lend her some matches. Young women did not usually knock at the doors of men's rooms about midnight on such flimsy pretexts. Here it meant to be on one's guard.

My suspicions that I was being watched were increased when she returned the matches the next day with profuse thanks and then cleverly started a conversation which ended with her asking me to give her French lessons. I excused myself on the

grounds of overwork. She replied to my surprise that the work at the Censor's Office could not be so exacting as all that.

"How did you get to know that I am in the censorship?"

"Oh, you know how servants talk," she replied.

"I see."

In order to discover what she was really after I asked her to go to the theatre with me that same evening, and spent much of my time in the next few days in her company. She came from the West Country and was hoping to find work in some Government department in London. She would like best of all to work in the censorship. Could I help her to get a job there? All this time I could never catch her in any contradiction. One day, however, she vanished without as much as a word of good-bye, and on looking through my things I found they had been carefully and systematically searched.

I now thought it best to change my lodgings, and therefore rented two rooms in South Kensington, and other quarters in another part of London, so as to be ready for all emergencies. But I knew perfectly well that if definite suspicions had been aroused neither of these measures would avail me.

In the meantime an order had been issued that all those letters in which requests were made for personal news to be forwarded on to Germany

were to be stopped, and I therefore had to look around for some other means of sending my reports home. Since the Censor had only the duty of examining the contents of all letters, whereas it was the function of the post to dispatch them, every letter that came into our hands was already franked and postmarked, and only letters thus postally in order were accepted by the post office officials for further dispatch from the censorship. Envelopes not bearing this evidence of travel through the regular channels would have been returned by the postal authorities. Indeed, they would not even have taken letters on which the time- and place-postmarks did not correspond with the rest of the batch.

Every letter posted in London and sent back from the Censor to the postal authorities must at the earliest bear the London postmark of the previous evening if the letter had gone its normal way ; letters from the provinces bore the postmark of the day before, and those from Scotland, or any place off the beaten track, of one day earlier still. Of course, the post office knew exactly how old any letter should and could be, according to the town where it had been mailed. In order, therefore, to send secret reports from the offices of the censorship, I needed envelopes already correctly franked and postmarked to match accurately with those of the outward mail which I should be examining on that day.

To obtain them I posted several times a week letters addressed to myself, using for this purpose so-called "window envelopes". These envelopes are much used in commercial correspondence and differ from ordinary ones by a slit through which the address of the recipient, written at the top of the letter itself, is seen when the sheet of notepaper is suitably folded. On these letters I always put 2½d. stamps, so that the envelopes would bear the necessary foreign postage. Mailing them in the city in the evening, they would reach me the following morning, and I would thus have properly franked and postmarked envelopes whose contents I could now change. At the office I would replace the newspaper clippings with my reports, and fold around them a slip of paper bearing the address of the real recipient. Then the envelope would be closed as usual with my "Opened by Censor" label and be put with the other outward London mail that was being examined. The address of the agent abroad could, however, not be inserted at home, since we did not know until we reached the office which country's outward London mail we should have to examine on that particular day. But at the office I could pick out a suitable address from the "Suspects List". This method proved quite practical.

The flood of news worth reporting that came in the early months of 1915 was followed in June

and July by a sudden ebb of information. All sources seemed to have dried up. This was a depressing time for me and my mind was full of a thousand doubts. Whoever, day in, day out, has to read the accounts of events on all fronts as presented from the enemy standpoint, in which his own country is constantly vilified, can only manage to neutralize the effects such versions are bound to produce in time by work, work, work.

Toward the end of this dead period, a little book sent by a Swiss to a friend in London seemed like the first cooling drink of water after a long march through the desert. It was the *Odyssey* of the *Ayesha*, her wonderful journey and the heroic exploits of her crew under Captain-Lieutenant von Muecke. I took this booklet home with me and devoured it from cover to cover, and when I had finished it I started it all over again. Officially, of course, such a book should have been stopped by the Censor : but the next day I brought it back to the office and sent it on to its destination in the hope that it would give someone else as much pleasure and encouragement as it had given me.

At the beginning of September I heard of the arrival of a young woman on whose co-operation I had begun to count, since I hoped she might prove of some service. She came of a Swedish family of French origin, had been well educated, was well-read and an accomplished linguist. She

had placed herself at the disposal of the German Secret Service. What had made her do it? Perhaps a certain sympathy for our people, who were fighting with their backs to the wall, a dash of romance, and probably, too, the subtle attraction a dangerous game often exercises.

This young lady got into England quite easily and without creating any interest. She came, apparently for her health's sake, to stay with an acquaintance in Scotland. Since there was nothing against her, she was allowed to land on the strength of her Swedish passport. I was just about to make a careful move to get into touch with her when I heard to my great surprise that she had applied for a post in the Swedish department of the postal censorship. That was a very bad blunder on her part, and could only result in arousing the suspicions of the authorities. Only some very potent reason would have justified the employment of a foreigner in any department of the War Office, and least of all a Swede, the one nation considered as thoroughly pro-German in England. Her application was rejected after she had been questioned with the usual searching suavity. From that moment, however, she was a marked woman and was put under constant, quiet observation. I got an urgent anonymous message of warning through to her, begging her to be careful; for heaven's sake, not to imagine that the English

were as simple-minded as she supposed them to be; and telling her, in addition, to lie low and for the moment to do absolutely nothing. It was useless.

This headstrong girl, who was probably driven on by her ambition and filled with the desire for quick results, persuaded herself no doubt that nobody suspected her and fluttered like a moth straight into the flame. She had good social connections and received her mail through the Danish Embassy. She therefore imagined herself a personage of such importance that nobody would dare to interfere with her. She was quite attractive, and by dint of flirtations with young officers whom she met in her hotel she tried to get information of some importance. A few weeks later I heard that she was considered highly suspect. Again, but without success, I tried to warn her. Almost at once, as though in defiance of the warning, she sent two stupid letters written in a very ordinary secret ink. They compromised her badly. In the middle of November she was arrested and brought before Sir Basil Thompson, whose famous cross-examination quickly broke down her resistance. A few weeks later she was condemned to death, but this sentence was afterwards commuted to penal servitude for life. Unfortunately, in her terror of death, she had tried to save herself by many statements which greatly damaged the German Secret Service. She told the

British authorities of an accommodation address which had often served us well : the address of a supposed Belgian officer who, in reality, did not exist at all, but who was reported to be a prisoner of war in Germany.

A few months later, when I was no longer working in the London office, I heard of another arrest. This was the case of a Spanish journalist, about thirty years old, and employed by a well known Madrid paper. But through a letter sent from Buenos Aires to a friend in London the authorities had already discovered, before ever he arrived in England, that he intended to work on behalf of Germany. He was allowed to enter the country. He had a liaison with a Parisian dancer whom he also tried to bring to London. In this he succeeded by inducing a reputable Spanish businessman in the city to engage this girl as shorthand typist. She, too, was allowed to enter the country. Now both mice were in the trap. The dancer was met on arrival by Scotland Yard officers and entertained by them : it soon became perfectly obvious that she was as unsuited for office work as any shorthand typist would be for the ballet.

The journalist had no idea that his friend had already been arrested, and continued to make one blunder after another. Repeated warnings had no effect on this vain man and were disregarded. It was not until his arrest that he realized how

serious the matter was for him. On being confronted by her lover, the dancer did her best to save him, but in vain. He could not stand up to his cross-examination. He stated that he wanted to marry the girl, but could not explain how he hoped to support a wife with luxurious tastes out of the modest sums that were supposed to be paid him by his paper for his articles. Scotland Yard had in the meantime sent an officer to Madrid, where they discovered that this man certainly belonged to one of the best families in Spain, but that he was a ne'er-do-well and had been so from his early youth. The *Liberal*, for which he was supposed to be working, had no idea of his existence. It became also apparent that the dancer had no knowledge of her lover's secret plan, and she was therefore only kept under arrest until he had been tried, and she was then sent back to France.

The Spaniard, too, to save his skin, offered Scotland Yard information and betrayed the orders he had received. He was to send accounts of the movements of British warships to Barcelona, from whence they would be retransmitted to the German submarine commanders. His confession alone would not have helped much, but the influence of his relatives was so great that the death sentence was not carried out, but later commuted to ten years' penal servitude. His fate

aroused very little sympathy. He had played for money and gain and had lost. It was merely the fate of an adventurer, which had nothing in common with the greatness and tragedy which surrounded the service of Edith Cavell, who dared all for the sake of her country and lost, but whose memory is honoured by friend and foe alike.

The details of these and many similar cases were told me by an officer of the secret police who worked under Sir Basil Thompson, and with whom I often spoke about his work, which was so closely allied to that of the censorship.

The measures taken by the British counter-espionage proved again and again the undoing of German agents who came to England to serve their country during the War. They usually came to grief on the precision with which these defensive services functioned, though also to some extent as the result of their own inexperience, which led them to imagine that it would be possible to succeed against such an old experienced fighter as England with obsolete methods of the day before yesterday. They would work with invisible inks which left traces that could almost be read with the naked eye, or wrote their secret messages under the postage stamps, an old trick easy to detect, and for which every envelope was examined as a matter of routine as soon as it reached the censorship. In an otherwise cleverly worded letter a

stroke under the signature would indicate the direction in which certain words were to be read to give details of the movements of troops. But since this stroke never gave the impression of a flourish, but was always drawn with a kind of mathematical precision, it at once attracted the eye of the practised examiner. Moreover, these letters were usually addressed to persons who had long been known to the British authorities as members of the German Secret Service and who had been on the "Suspects List" for months.

It was harrowing for me to have to watch, as it were, step by step the stages of my fellow-countrymen's undoing without being able to raise a finger to help them. For in one thing they were all alike : nothing was of any use ; neither the most urgent warnings nor the terrible example of others' fate. Every one of them thought himself too clever to be caught, and was certain that the others had only failed because they were not nearly as astute as he. Not one really believed in the possibility of his own failure until it was too late and he found himself caught in the meshes.

In October 1915 I received an order from the head of my department to report myself to Colonel Q, one of the higher officials of the censorship. The head offices were at that time in another building in the same street. I walked down there, prepared for the worst. The Colonel, to whom I

had once been introduced, greeted me, however, with the greatest kindness, and began asking me all about the economic conditions in the United States and in Switzerland, because lately we had been going very thoroughly into the trade connections of the latter country. He then explained to me that it was intended to open a branch of the postal censorship in Liverpool in order to deal with the entire mail of North and South America. He pledged me to secrecy about it for the time being, so that I could not tell my colleagues anything when they overwhelmed me with their questions on my return to my table. The new branch of the censorship was opened in December 1915, and I was transferred to it as a sort of specialist on economics in the department for registered mails.

This position in Liverpool suited my purposes in many ways. The post I held offered me a certain independence and also afforded me a great many more privileges : more sources of information became open to me, and I could see all worth seeing of the whole mail that went through the office, since I had to consider the reports on correspondence already examined and held up by my colleagues. The sending of direct messages to Germany became, however, impossible for the moment. Only letters to and from the Northern and Southern States of America came through to

be censored. All my previous methods of sending my secret reports were useless in Liverpool, and I had to find new ones to replace them.

In a very short time it became apparent how well this branch of the censorship succeeded, as one area after another in which German interests had been important came under the throttling control of the British Censor.

One Saturday in Januray 1916 one of my colleagues brought me a letter of extreme interest. It was written by the late Mr. Godfrey Isaacs, the managing director of the Marconi Company, to his patent attorneys in New York. The examiner was of opinion that this was a case of infringement of the "trading with the enemy" regulations—i.e., that it was intended to buy something from a German firm, which at that time was strictly forbidden. As a matter of fact, the affair was something quite different. It was a case of a new invention, the de Vriess heterodyne valve, which improved wireless telegraphy considerably, and which was bound to have a very adverse effect on the value of the Marconi patents. The German Telefunken Company, which belonged to the Siemens concern, was about to buy up the patent of this invention. The negotiations on this matter, which had been carried on between Siemens' representative, a German engineer in Batavia, and their patent attorneys in New York, had been caught up in

the net of the British Censor. The whole correspondence had then been sent on to Isaacs to prevent this transaction if he thought that this patent was at all important. This was the situation as it presented itself to me in the letter I had before me, in which Isaacs instructed his attorneys in New York under no circumstances to let this valuable patent fall into German hands.

It was then about midday. A ship of the White Star or the Cunard Line, which alternately sailed twice a week for New York, was due to leave port at three o'clock. One hour before the ship sailed the bags of registered letters that were intended to go on board had to be ready. Plenty of time to spoil Mr. Isaacs' plans. I hurriedly wrote a brief summary of the situation and ran to the next public post office to send my letter off as "Registered and Express" to my agent in New York. Such letters, however, could be mailed up to an hour before sailing time if an extra fee of two shillings and sixpence was paid. They would then be sent by messenger to the Censor's offices, examined at once, and at once returned to the post office. As soon as my letter had been handed in I hurried back to my office and told the sorting department that a suspicious letter—giving the address of my agent in New York—was expected, and that on its arrival it should be handed to me without fail, unopened. One hour later I had my

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Unfortunately, as was often the case at that time, it was all love's labour lost. Certainly the Telefunken Company managed to get hold of the patent rights in time, but the following year, when the United States declared war on us, they were confiscated.

But at this time America was still at peace with us and made a point of emphasizing her neutrality on every occasion. In spite of all this, huge quantities of ammunition were made in the United States for the Allies, mainly shells of medium calibre. Several British ordnance officers were stationed as accredited representatives at the munition factories in America, especially in Bethlehem and Pittsburg, so as to ensure that the orders were carried out exactly as detailed. In order not to cause any undue attention—since the States

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were neutral—these officers did not use their military designation but were simply addressed by their surnames and all their letters were so directed.

The first of these letters which passed through our department contained a set of working drawings to scale for the manufacture of six-inch shells. The examiner picked this letter out at once and brought it to me in a great hurry.

“We’ve made a catch this time !” he whispered excitedly, his eyes agleam with the lust of the man-hunter. “Important drawings that someone has stolen from the War Office in order to send them to his agents in New York.”

“Really? That’s fine—let’s have a look at them.”

The plans, which were in an envelope without any accompanying letter, bore the official stamp of the ordnance department of the War Office. It was clear that they were being sent to the officer in Pittsburg in a way that should not attract any particular attention. In order to be quite certain, the head of our department rang up London and received instructions to send the drawings on to the States at once.

These plans interested me. It would have been futile to photograph them, since they would have been of little use to our people at home. Was there a way of making them useless in some way and so retard manufacture?

I did not know what part of such plans was the most important : certainly the scale must be essential. It was therefore very unfortunate that the end of a burning cigarette should have dropped exactly on this part of the drawings. Three weeks later our department was severely reprimanded for the inexcusable carelessness with which such important documents had been handled. In the course of the next few weeks it happened repeatedly that separate sheets of plans got mislaid and were only found again when the mail-boat had left, to be then sent on. Complaints became so frequent of the negligence with which such plans were dealt with in their transit through the censorship that a few months later the addresses of these letters were placed on the "White List" : that is to say, the letters were to be sent through in future uncensored. Thus ended another opportunity.

It was all so depressing and disheartening ! Fortune had placed me near the very centre of the mighty mechanism which was drawing out the life-blood of the Central Powers, and yet the most I could do was to retard the dispatch of some drawings ! My efforts seemed like childish pranks when compared with those needed in the terrible condition in which Germany found herself. I felt like a small boy throwing a pebble at a steel-clad giant ; like trying to extinguish a roaring fire with a few drops of water. Was it any use going on ?

Now and then a bag of mail arrived for the countries bordering on Germany, although such mail was always censored in London, for the Liverpool branch was primarily only for the correspondence with the Northern and the Southern States of America. Seldom though it was that this happened it offered me an opportunity of using the direct connection with Germany which I had missed so much in the last few months.

Mainly, however, our department was engaged in censoring the whole of the bank and business correspondence between the United States and England. Among other things there were always hundreds of bills of lading and other documents essential in the shipping trade. In view of the shrinkage of the total tonnage and the tremendous demand for space, it was important both for ship-owners and government that all vessels bringing good or munitions for France and England, should be unloaded as speedily as possible and be quickly turned. Here was perhaps a chance of strewing a little sand in the works. The greater authority given me by my new position enabled me to cause a more thorough examination of these shipping documents to be made than was really necessary, and my superior readily agreed to this proposal. They were so interested in a thorough censorship of the entire mail that they did not appreciate the consequences of such a measure. The examination

of such letters was now so much improved, so "fined down", and necessarily slowed down, that the discharge of the ships whose papers went through our office would ultimately be bound to be somewhat delayed. According to my computations this might mean the equivalent of a reduction of the freight tonnage serving the Allies of about four hundred thousand tons in the year. A drop of water on a hot stone !

A splendid source of information was the reports sent by London representatives of the leading American newspapers in addition to their cables to head offices. These reports were often confidential and not at all intended for publication. Most American correspondents were of course *personæ græte* to the British Government, and a great deal of material was placed at their disposal. Some of the correspondents of the anti-English Press were less generously treated. But since these newspapers had a combined circulation of over twenty million, and also exercised a great deal of influence, the British authorities very shrewdly refrained from interfering with them, and confined themselves to a very close censorship of all their letters and reports sent to America.

Among them a woman was particularly able. She sent her very interesting reports as registered letters via a relative in the United States. These letters were always intercepted, sent direct to

London and there submitted to the competent official at the Foreign Office. The authorities wanted to know what this lady had to say and were very keen to discover how she obtained her astonishingly accurate information. Her excellent connections with the leading personages in England, France, and Belgium were all too apparent, and she seemed to be a very close friend of the American Ambassador in London, Dr. Page, who was known as an ardent Anglophile.

Her reports were always signed with a Christian name, which I will call "Polly". Scotland Yard, of course, knew her name, address, and antecedents. She was of Irish descent and had all the intelligence and dry, brilliant wit of her race. The first report of hers that I ever saw came through our office in February 1916. It dealt with a very confidential conversation at the American Embassy, at which a British minister and a prominent French politician had been present. "Polly" explained in detail how these statesmen considered the present situation. The Minister had stated that Germany's military position could not be any stronger than it was at the moment, in view of the enormous losses incurred by the French, which had been partly caused by the unfortunate strategy of Joffre, and partly by the mistaken tactics used by the French armies. A genuine offer of peace from the Central

Powers, which would include the evacuation of Belgium and the French areas then occupied, would have found such an echo in the population that a continuance of the War, in spite of any inter-Allied arrangements about the minimum terms at which peace might be concluded, would have been impossible. It would have meant defeat for the Allies, since their present losses were about 20 per cent higher than the German although Germany had been attacking all through the campaign. Dr. Page and the Frenchman agreed with this opinion, but did not believe that German statesmen would have the brilliant idea of offering reasonably suitable terms at this juncture.

That was the main theme of the report. The enemy felt himself in a tight corner and yet safe since he counted on the Germans always to miss the right moment for everything. He feared us like the deuce and yet could play with us because we were politically so hopelessly outmatched. This is still the case to-day.

"Polly's" letters always came to the censorship on a Saturday morning, and, owing to the fact that they had to make the extra return journey to London, could not catch any steamer before Wednesday. I therefore had plenty of time to photograph the most important passages and send them to my cover address in New York to be transmitted to Washington.

had once been introduced, greeted me, however, with the greatest kindness, and began asking me all about the economic conditions in the United States and in Switzerland, because lately we had been going very thoroughly into the trade connections of the latter country. He then explained to me that it was intended to open a branch of the postal censorship in Liverpool in order to deal with the entire mail of North and South America. He pledged me to secrecy about it for the time being, so that I could not tell my colleagues anything when they overwhelmed me with their questions on my return to my table. The new branch of the censorship was opened in December 1915, and I was transferred to it as a sort of specialist on economics in the department for registered mails.

This position in Liverpool suited my purposes in many ways. The post I held offered me a certain independence and also afforded me a great many more privileges : more sources of information became open to me, and I could see all worth seeing of the whole mail that went through the office, since I had to consider the reports on correspondence already examined and held up by my colleagues. The sending of direct messages to Germany became, however, impossible for the moment. Only letters to and from the Northern and Southern States of America came through to

be censored. All my previous methods of sending my secret reports were useless in Liverpool, and I had to find new ones to replace them.

In a very short time it became apparent how well this branch of the censorship succeeded, as one area after another in which German interests had been important came under the throttling control of the British Censor.

One Saturday in January 1916 one of my colleagues brought me a letter of extreme interest. It was written by the late Mr. Godfrey Isaacs, the managing director of the Marconi Company, to his patent attorneys in New York. The examiner was of opinion that this was a case of infringement of the "trading with the enemy" regulations—i.e., that it was intended to buy something from a German firm, which at that time was strictly forbidden. As a matter of fact, the affair was something quite different. It was a case of a new invention, the de Vriess heterodyne valve, which improved wireless telegraphy considerably, and which was bound to have a very adverse effect on the value of the Marconi patents. The German Telefunken Company, which belonged to the Siemens concern, was about to buy up the patent of this invention. The negotiations on this matter, which had been carried on between Siemens' representative, a German engineer in Batavia, and their patent attorneys in New York, had been caught up in

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Although the fact that the German military position was considered to be so favourable by the enemy offered some satisfaction, and raised hopes to a certain extent, still the realization of the inexhaustible reserves at the disposal of England and the knowledge of the trend of events and opinions in America served to dash these hopes as soon as they were born. And the events of the next few months showed that this pessimism was justified. During May, a document came into our department which was of such great importance that a summary of the contents was at once telephoned to London, and from there we received the order to send the document to headquarters at once. In spite of this I succeeded in delaying the despatch for another day. It could hardly be hoped that our department would ever get another sight of it and it was of vital importance that Berlin should have a copy without delay.

It was a typewritten copy of a nineteen-page report dealing with the political, military, and economic position of the Central Powers. The description of the military situation certainly came from one who knew all about it. The effects of this war of attrition, the gradual breakdown of morale, and the increasing shortage of material, was described in detail, supported with statistics. It was further mentioned that the Navy had received secret orders not to sink any more enemy

passenger ships. The opinions and characters of the leading personages were minutely analysed, coolly, objectively, but with amazing accuracy, and the real influence they had on the course of the War was carefully evaluated. Then came a resumé of the economic position, which dealt with the questions both of foodstuffs and war supplies—each of our weak points summed up in a few curt, pregnant phrases. The whole document contained nothing but facts which could only have come from a trained observer to whom all sources of information were open.

The name of the sender was not mentioned, nor the well-springs of his information. With the assistance of a biographical reference-book, the American *Who's Who*, which gave all the facts about the leading people in the States, I found out the maiden name of the wife of the man to whom this letter was addressed. By means of these data I was able to trace through a maze of family connections the name of a foreigner who was living in Berlin, but who certainly had had nothing to do with the despatch of this copy of an obviously confidential diplomatic document to such an address. I came to the conclusion that the unknown sender had secured a copy of this report, used the name of the addressee, having probably heard it somewhere, and had then simply sent this letter to the States knowing it would reach

the British Censorship, with whose workings he seemed to be familiar.

At the beginning of June 1916 the newspapers were full of a great war council of the Allies which was to take place in London with the object of discussing the next, unavoidable offensive, as well as plans for the coming autumn and winter. There were certain influential men who were demanding one central control for the entire Allied military forces. I hardly dared to hope that I would ever get to hear a word about what was discussed, when suddenly "Polly" again made her appearance with a letter in which she expressed her opinion of what would probably be said at the conference in a manner which showed plainly that it was certainly not mere guesswork. She spoke of the plan to disarm Greece and to support Rumania by means of an attack delivered from a Greek base. The entry of Rumania into the War on the side of the Allies was now only a question of weeks. She described the position in France, and how, with a certain amount of bitterness, every effort was now being made to force England to place her reserves of man power more quickly, and in greater numbers, at the disposal of the common cause.

That summer I spent a short leave in a small place miles from anywhere in Derbyshire. From the windows I had a view of broad fields and lush

meadows, bordered by low hedges. Cattle were browsing contentedly, and there was the soothing hum of bees. The door of my living-room led directly into a shady garden, where an easy chair stood under a chestnut tree. Quiet, rest, seclusion —no sign of war! Was it possible that such a spot still existed? But my nerves were taut and I could not strip off the knowledge that there was a war, even here in the midst of the peace of Nature. In the distance were a few weeping willows, bent as if they, too, were weighed down with the burden of war. And then in many windows of the cottages there were crosses and wreaths as a sign that here, too, mourning had entered.

At the front the battle of the Somme was raging. And the newspapers came every day. I stood it for a fortnight, and then I had to go back. As long as the world was seething like a witch's cauldron it was hopeless to try to find rest.

At the beginning of August another report passed through our department which obviously came from the same source as the previous one in May. It dealt with the position in Germany, which had meanwhile grown a little worse, and told of our Austrian Allies, who were breaking down under the growing strain. Everything that the supreme command of the Central Powers had done or left undone was carefully noted but without any criticism. It was no expression of opinion,

but a detailed summing-up of bare cold facts. A very depressing document.

An interesting account of the coming presidential election in the United States, the expectations and policies of the two candidates, the hopes and fears connected with them, was contained in a letter which really belonged to the "White List", but which was opened in spite of this. It was a report for Lord Northcliffe from a well-known ex-member of the British Consular service who had, years before, settled in New York, where he used his social and political connections for the purpose of journalism. It was a great surprise to learn that he was one of Lord Northcliffe's confidential correspondents. He informed him that he had just come back from Albany, where Hughes, the Republican candidate, had definitely told him that if he were elected President the entry of America into the War on the side of the Allies could be counted on.

The world in general was of the opinion at that time that if Wilson were re-elected America would at least remain neutral, and the Central Powers hoped even more of this man of stately phrases. But the authorities in England knew better.

It was well understood that Wilson was not inclined officially to adopt the cause of the Allies unless forced by irresistible circumstances, but it

was clearly realized at the same time that this candidate was no friend of Germany.

On September 7 another twenty-page detailed report again came through from the same fatal source in Berlin. I had made arrangements that these letters for the now well-known address should be brought to me at once unopened by the sorting department. Again the same uncanny accuracy, the same knowledge of the smallest and most intimate details. Who could it be who was in a position so close to the Emperor's immediate entourage as to be able to obtain such information and send it to England ?

The report dealt first of all with the development of the military and political situation leading to the appointment of Hindenburg and Ludendorff to the supreme command of the fighting forces, and described the conference in the General Headquarters at Pless* in detail.

The two Field Marshals were given practically *carte blanche*. They took over the political leadership as well as entire charge of the whole military organization. The Emperor remained Commander-in-Chief only in name. The report went on to describe the economic position, mentioned the poor harvest, gave statistics of the

* The mention of the German General Headquarters at Pless in connection with these reports has nothing to do with the unfounded rumours that coupled the name of the *châtelaine* with the leakage of information. It was known, of course, in Germany as well as in England, that her sympathies were with her native land.

amounts of grain and cattle, food supplies, copper, cotton, leather, rubber and all other essential war-materials then stored in Germany. It was mentioned that Rumania's declaration of war had come as a complete surprise, and that submarine warfare would be resumed and carried on with the greatest severity.

A photograph of this report, confined to the smallest possible space, went with the necessary explanations, via New York to Washington, and from there, perhaps, to Germany, provided of course that there were still ways and means of sending it. Loss of time—a fortnight at the least. If, on the other hand, British intelligence officers wanted to send news from Germany to London, it arrived in about twenty-four hours. Cables could be sent on from the nearest neutral countries, or letters or messengers could bring the information to England. The boundaries of an inland country can always easily be crossed, but not those of an island kingdom. It was the same right through the War : England got her news through in immense quantities, directly and without loss of time, whereas Germany only received hers in a roundabout way, and then often too late. A further consideration was how long the route via New York would still be available. As soon as America should abandon her attitude of threadbare neutrality, this method, too, would have to be given up.

No age will ever appreciate the sum total of Germany's gigantic efforts in this, the greatest of all wars. With bound hands and laden with a thousand burdens, we had to carry on in the same way as a dozen enemies who, free and untrammelled, were themselves almost breaking under the strain.

From time to time the method of sending information to America had to be changed to avoid the danger of discovery. It was risky after a time to include my letters as enclosures in the large mail packages sent by the banks or big London business houses to their New York customers. The number of items would not, of course, correspond with the number mentioned in the covering letter. It could, however, be taken for granted that a New York firm would not bother about there being an extra enclosure in their mail package, and would send it on under the assumption that the sender desired this and that the Censor had raised no objection. It was, however, not advisable to use the same firm twice : for a repetition might very well have led to enquiries.

A new way had therefore to be found. Were there any possible means that had not been considered or rejected for some reason or other ? Was there anything before which one shrank back in one's thoughts ?

In cases of special importance I still used the

method of the "window envelope" which I have mentioned before and the route via the neutral states bordering on Germany. Liverpool, however, had nothing to do with the European post, this being examined in the London offices alone. The letter, ready for despatch, addressed, franked, postmarked, and closed with the "Opened by Censor" label, had therefore to be taken to London. In Liverpool my colleagues imagined me a regular Don Juan because I went there so often. Several other men did the same, but that was quite natural, for they were married and wanted to spend their week-ends with their families. I took the chaff in good part, and let them think whatever they chose. When I went to London it was not, heaven knows, on pleasure bent as they imagined. It was certainly not amusement to visit the nice fellows at the London office with whom one had been associated for over a year, to say one had dropped in to see them, to listen to their honest welcome, and then to go from table to table, talking to them all, until one got a chance of slipping the prepared letter into a pile ready for the country to which it was addressed.

Could one still consider one's self a decent man ? How I wished I could join our men at the front ! How glad I should have been to be able to change places with any one of them ! I would ten times rather have been in the trenches under fire than

have been constantly in the throes of these internal conflicts. True, the enemy ought to look out for himself. He knew that we would try to find out things, just as he did. Deception is fair in war and being deceived the fate of war.

But wasn't that really all vain sophistry? Were these not artificial arguments to combat despair, a sign of utter self-disgust? In agony one clings to a few words that may give one a little peace for a short while : Duty, Service, Necessity. Does it matter in the service for one's country whether physical or mental suffering is the greater sacrifice ?

Perhaps the comrades at the front would also gladly have changed places. I can see them before me, see every detail of their torn and bleeding bodies, hear their cursing and shrieking with pain. They lie there helpless, lost, half mad with thirst and hunger. If they were offered the exchange, wouldn't they jump at it and shrug their shoulders at a man who was brooding over, and could not master, such emotional difficulties during the War? That thought is a help, and the troubles of mind are gone, but I always knew they would come again and again.

There were such fine and splendid people in Liverpool ; men and women of charm, character, and attainments. I had to deceive them all. There was the head of the department for printed

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matter, for instance, formerly a professor of mathematics, wrangler and "blue", a man of great scholarship and genuine culture. We often met over a cup of tea—in his office or mine. His talk was always witty, wise, stimulating ; withal he was very simple, with that true modesty that is the hallmark of real worth.

There were also many warm-hearted, high-minded and clever women with whom I came into contact every day. As more and more men were called up for active service the work of censorship was placed more and more in the hands of women examiners. It was not always possible to avoid or refuse their kind invitations, which came from the depths of their real womanly feeling and sympathy—and which were an ordeal for me.

In the course of time letters of mourning passing through the censorship became more frequent, but there was a natural feeling of reluctance to trespass upon the grief of the writers. They were therefore not always opened, but if they were the contents was only very cursorily examined. My thoughts began to revolve around these letters. I had not found any satisfactory method of sending my news. Could anything be done in that way ? Was it brutal ? Of course it was brutal. Wasn't it brutal to throw a hand grenade in the face of some youngster, full of life, who had done no harm

and was only defending his country? Wasn't it brutal to bombard churches that had become machine-gun nests, or to use graves as barricades? All this is terrible and brutal ; but it is a "necessity of war" and it will always be done. I am no pacifist. War is a scourge, but we shall not do away with it so easily. Does the world imagine that it can get along without struggle and catastrophes? Will it try to get rid of earthquakes and floods and tornadoes and pestilence?

Sentiment is a luxury : a private matter for lonely hours. Here it was a case of duty, nothing but duty, and every chance had to be taken and made the most of.

Some rough photographic carbon paper was cut to the size and shape of a letter-card. The report that I wanted to send was photographically printed on a reduced scale on this paper, but *not* developed. Across this I wrote the news of some fictitious death. The card was then put in a black bordered envelope lined with black tissue paper, "Aunt Mary" written across as sole address, and this envelope closed in my dark room. A thick piece of notepaper, with the request to break the news gently to Aunt Mary before giving her the letter, was folded round the inner envelope, and the whole put inside another black bordered envelope, and sent to the address of my agent in New York. If the letter arrived

safely unopened, the agent, who had already been informed through other channels what to do with any mourning envelopes, opened it in a dark-room and developed it. If, however, the letter was opened in the censorship then the light would effectively destroy the undeveloped positive. "Aunt Mary" was of great service for a while, but this method, too, could be employed only for a time, and others had to be devised.

Events began to move with great rapidity at the end of 1916: the creation of the kingdom of Poland; the election of President Wilson; the death of the Emperor Francis Joseph. The feeling grew that the crisis was not far off.

Then, shortly before Christmas, another letter arrived from "Polly". She had dined during the week with some member of the staff of the American Embassy in London, and was full of news. For instance, she knew that Wilson would soon send off his Note to all belligerent and neutral countries asking them to co-operate in bringing about peace. In addition, "Polly's" letter contained a number of interesting details relating to internal politics, an account of how neatly Lloyd George had managed to bring about Asquith's fall, and how he proposed to take over, and unsparingly use spurs, bit, and whip in riding the Government. But the whole letter seemed pregnant with a spirit of peace in the offing, which had an exhilarating

effect on its reader. Peace—a strange word—it had almost lost its meaning. Yet hope flared up.

It was Christmas and this spirit was in the air. A few days later the offer of peace from the German Emperor arrived and was published everywhere. To most it came as a great surprise. Our assistant censor, W. D. Mc., read the text through very critically and shook his head. He did not believe that this offer could ever be accepted as a basis of peace negotiations. It was couched too much in the terms of a victor. Perhaps this was necessary for consumption in Germany, but it must ruin any chance of being taken seriously by the Allies. And, of course, Wilson was deeply offended. His intention of making an appeal to all belligerents must have been known to the authorities in Berlin, and now they had taken the very words out of his mouth and touched him on his weakest spot : his vanity, for, already, he had looked on himself as the world's peacemaker.

All hope was thus dashed. Reality showed a sterner face. It had been an unlucky and mistaken move ; every finer political instinct seemed, as had so often been the case before, to have been lacking in the German statesmen. Two months earlier, when Asquith had been at the helm, the proposals might have had a different reception. Now, however, they came to Lloyd George, whose bitter and irreconcilable enmity to anything German

had taken on an almost personal character. A few days later, in one of his most thrilling and most fiery, hostile speeches he turned down with an eloquent gesture of contempt the lame German offer and swept Parliament and the whole people along with him.

In the clubs, the peace proposals were for days the main subject of conversation. Colonel J. Y., who knew all about the food-supplies still available in Germany, was of opinion that the Central Powers were at the end of their resources, even if they had been in occupation of ten times as much enemy country as they now held. He illustrated the situation in the terms of a poker player : "You can't bluff if you know that your opponent knows you have only a pair of two's in your hand."

Before the end of the year the curt refusal of this German peace offer was made public, and shortly afterwards also the reply to Wilson's proposals. This last, however, was done cleverly and diplomatically, which made it sound more like a compliment than a refusal. However, many rumours were still going the rounds that, in spite of these public announcements, secret peace negotiations were still being held ; but this was and remained nothing but talk. The form taken by a new outburst of anti-German propaganda, redoubled in intensity, seemed to point to the fact that something was going on behind the scenes

it was desired to camouflage ; but it did not seem to be anything connected with peace.

Events followed each other now in breathless succession. February 1917 started with Germany's unconditional submarine warfare, the beginning of the downhill road of my country. Three days later diplomatic relations were broken off between the United States and Germany, and the German Embassy left Washington. At the end of the month I was told by a well informed officer, who was usually the very acme of discretion, that Admiral Sims had arrived incognito, and had at once gone to London. This was the initial step leading to a close co-operation between the British and American naval staffs, and contradicted the report of an American, who had just come from the States, and who maintained that Wilson did not dream of preparing for war, and that the abrupt breaking off of diplomatic relations with Germany should only be looked on in the light of an extraordinary political gesture.

It seemed as if this favourable turn of events for the Entente had also increased their capabilities. The British Intelligence Service doubled the results that they had ever achieved before. That section of the service which had devoted its efforts to that hitherto uncertain neutral, the United States, could now be diverted from military to other objectives, for it must not be supposed that with

the prospective entry of America into the War on the side of the Allies she had ceased to be an object of serious and anxious consideration. The internal political conditions and the marshalling of her resources were still under careful observation and control. Almost every day the censorship received instructions to look out for any mention of certain matters in American correspondence, and make reports on them. The Government wanted to know what the feelings of the American people really were as regards the war and what was the burden of any comments on the course of events that were being made in the letters passing daily through our hands. Then we had to find out and report how the American Government were meeting, or intending to meet, the agitation of the Communist ranks of the American working classes, the so called I.W.W. (Industrial Workers of the World).

At that time there were continual labour troubles among the workers in Montana, the mining district of the West. The supply of raw materials could easily be affected by these conflicts, a matter of supreme importance not only to the necessary warlike preparations of America itself but also to the Entente. If this movement, which we should probably call Bolshevism to-day, increased, then it might easily have a retarding effect on the entry of the United States into the War. For these

reasons the British Government wanted information about every strike and labour trouble in America, in order to form an opinion about what results such disturbances might have on the American economic life. Everything we could find out about such matters had to be sent every week to a special department in the Censor's Office in London, which sifted and collated the material and submitted it to the Cabinet.

The internal affairs of the smaller States were also always very carefully observed. One of the ladies in my department, for instance, had to deal only with the correspondence which referred to certain happenings in Peru, where Leguia was planning a little revolution to place him at the head of affairs in that State. England was watching this movement so as to step in at the critical moment if her interests were likely to be prejudiced. It was a question, *inter alia*, of certain concessions which might be obtained by British firms as soon as a political change should have come about in Peru.

A very interesting and typical example of the way England knew how to take advantage of all opportunities was revealed by the correspondence between the London branch of the Standard Oil Company and its head office in New York. At the suggestion of the British Government the great oil companies on both sides of the Atlantic

had formed a pooling arrangement of all their tankers in order to use the available tonnage with the least wastage on empty runs. For this purpose the markets of the world were divided between them. The idea was that the oil tankers belonging to different competing companies should not cover the same routes in different parts of the world, but each—the American Standard Oil Company and the British Shell Oil and their affiliated concerns—should sell only in those territories that were geographically the most easily accessible. Thus it was expected to save tonnage on the one hand, and, on the other, prevent a shortage of supplies. The basis of this pooling arrangement was, of course, an equitable territorial distribution involving as little as possible the dislocation of the trade. The London representatives of the Standard Oil Company were now complaining that the routing of the tankers as determined by the British Admiralty always favoured British companies to the detriment of the American. The correspondence about these differences, which came through our office—recitals of hopeless protests by the Americans and of the suave inflexibility of the British Admiralty—were so characteristic that one could not help but chuckle at this battle for trade between John Bull and Uncle Sam.

Whereas the British Intelligence Organization recorded success after success, ours went from bad

to worse. The sending of reports to Germany had become a matter of extreme difficulty. The way via America, which had proved itself certain even if slow, was now impossible. Repeated attempts to establish personal connections failed owing to the sharp control of the British authorities. Again and again some daring man was caught in the net of the defensive measures. In the summer of 1917, a young Norwegian journalist named Hagn was arrested. He had been in England in 1916, had then returned home and now came back. This aroused suspicions, and he was carefully watched. His conduct did not seem quite to fit in with his supposed profession. He was shadowed and his correspondence closely examined. He seemed to use an extraordinary good secret ink, and for a time no reagents could be found to develop it. However, the authorities persisted till they did find one. Then the man was arrested and eventually sentenced to imprisonment.

In September of the same year a young Brazilian tried to land from Holland. His papers were in order, but his letters had often gone through the Censor's Office, and he was known to have all sorts of questionable connections, so that his name had been on the "Suspects List" for some time. He was arrested at once on arrival and taken to Scotland Yard, where he broke down under cross-examination and gave away all his secret instructions.

He betrayed even the details for the use of his secret ink, so that the British Intelligence Service could employ this knowledge to cause misleading information to be sent to Germany.

A certain Dutchman who came to England as a dealer in films met equally short shrift. He could not explain how he maintained the upkeep of his expensive household from the meagre returns provided by his film business. That, together with the other evidence obtained against him, left no doubt as to his guilt. He, like the rest, was sentenced to death, the sentence being later commuted to one of penal servitude. One could send only anonymous warnings to these people, who were really lost as soon as they had been placed under observation, for experience had shown time and again that such agents, who were not actuated by motives of patriotism but only by those of gain, at once betrayed their employers when caught, and, in an attempt to save their own lives, dragged down everyone who had been careless enough to get in touch with them.

It was perhaps even more difficult to leave England than to get in. Only very rarely was it possible to send news to Germany by word of mouth. At one time a faithful and absolutely reliable neutral had obtained, after a great deal of trouble, the necessary permission to travel to the continent, and was thus able to take an important

verbal message for me. It was a lucky chance ; the necessity for his journey might just as well have arisen at a time when there was nothing very important to report. In another especially notable case, I was able, through the efforts of this same man, to send someone to Paris and thence to Spain—a journey which was not subject to so many restrictions and formalities as that to Switzerland or to the northern states. To relay news on from Spain to Germany was, however, correspondingly more difficult and time robbing.

Such verbal messages were by no means quite without risk to the sender. I had found this out already in the spring of 1915, at a time when all women of German origin who had been living in England and who were not suspected of espionage were being repatriated. Luck had favoured me to get into touch with a German girl on whom I could rely. She reached home without any trouble, but, on arrival, was closely questioned by a man in a German officer's uniform, who asked her if she were carrying any messages, who was the sender, and what was his address. Fortunately she had been expressly warned to say nothing to anyone except to a person specifically named. She therefore refused to give the officer any information whatsoever, though of course without knowing, or even suspecting, that this "German" officer was a British Intelligence officer.

The fact that England is an island made it seem the natural thing to try to find messengers among seamen. The risk involved was naturally very great. There could be placed no reliance on the loyalty and honesty of these men, who came and went, and who had nothing to lose by betrayal. Added to this, England's pressure on neutrals was so great that shipowners whose boats called regularly at English ports were induced to man them as far as possible with pro-Allied crews.

Liverpool, like some other British ports, had its so called Chinese quarter. Here it was only one narrow street, where the Chinese had their laundries, their small shops, and their restaurants. In peace-time the Chinese members of ships' crews from vessels trading with the Far East forgathered there. On one occasion I had a simple meal in one of these restaurants with an acquaintance who had lived many years in China, where he had grown to know and appreciate native dishes, and we had been much surprised at being served with extraordinarily good Chinese tea. In the meantime my friend had been transferred. I now made a habit of going down there, and used to talk now and then to the owner, who would know very likely what was happening in the harbour, but I felt that he was not the right man for the job of go-between. I then frequented other eating-houses along the water front on the look-out

for Scandinavian seamen likely to serve my purposes, but all my efforts to find someone to whom I could safely entrust an important message were in vain. Once a Norwegian came up to me and asked me whether I wanted to leave England ; he claimed to have helped several men to escape military service. This man did not make a good impression on me, and I very much doubted whether he spoke the truth. England had built an invisible and almost impenetrable wall round the coasts that was not so easy either to climb over or to get through without permission.

As a censorship official I knew that only too well. I also knew how hard it was to get out of the clutches of such persons when once one has got into their hands by some incautious word, and I decided to have nothing to do with him. I had to be more careful than ever, for there were enough dangers all around me without my incurring new and unnecessary ones, and unpleasant surprises were always lurking around the corner.

Near Liverpool work was now proceeding on a new rest camp for American troops on their way to France. The camps where the troops received the finishing touches of their training before being sent to the front were in France itself. A great many American officers came, of course, with these troops, some of them belonging to the regular army, and some who had been given temporary

commissions on joining the expeditionary force. I had to be prepared, therefore, to meet acquaintances from the States. America is large—but the world is small. And, indeed, one day as I strolled through the card-room of the club an American officer came up to me beaming with delight at seeing a familiar face. He was an old business acquaintance from New York, member of a large firm of chartered accountants, and now serving as paymaster on an American troopship. We had often played golf and tennis together. Luckily, he did not seem to know my real nationality or else he had forgotten it. To his real regret and my secret joy he only stayed a few days in Liverpool, since he was transferred to London for some duty ashore.

I had safely steered past this rock. What would the next be like? In order to shake off the depression that had been bothering me of late, I went down early next Sunday morning to the club. An hour's squash tennis could usually shake me up a bit and clear my brain. I would forget my worries for the time being and only know that I was tired physically. The old club servant and marker, John, a splendid old chap, and one of the most interesting characters in the club, used often to play with us when we had no other partner. He was a tough septuagenarian, but as elastic and keen as the youngest of us, and always ready and willing to show us the finer points of the game.

That day, however, there was another early guest there, a British officer who was spending his leave in Liverpool and wanted, just as I did, to make the most of the early morning hours. We played a few sets together, and then got to talking. He came from South Africa and chanced to mention his wife's maiden name. How small the world really is ! I had known her as a baby, and had often given her rides on my shoulders ! Africa—and youth ! How far away it all seemed, although I was by no means old.

I often felt that even the present was remote from any personal lot or destiny. I seemed to see it all as a spectator, more and more detached, witness of a hopeless fight. The great weariness which had come over our people in Germany during the last stages of the long-drawn-out, heroic struggle against increasing odds must have affected all Germans wherever they were. In England, too, people were getting war weary. The change in the British Government, by which Carson took over the War Office and Churchill the Admiralty, the Pope's peace proposals, the fall of Bethmann-Hollweg—all these events scarcely made an impression on one's mind. People had become hardened ; only the most extraordinary happenings had still the power to arouse interest. The events in Russia did not cause half the stir one might have expected : America's entry into the War more
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than compensated the Entente for the collapse of Imperial Russia.

If the transmission of messages to Germany had not been so extremely difficult, I could now have reported every day the movements of troops and ships. Since the entry of America into the War I was forced to rely on the only possible method left open to me, that of taking my letters to London and trying to pass them through the London censorship offices. Inasmuch as this had to be done during office hours, it meant asking for leave every time. Of course, I could not do it often. My frequent visits to London had already aroused some interest. Very often they were quite useless : either there was no outward provincial mail for the neutral country for which my letter was prepared, or it had already been dispatched, or some other circumstance interfered to prevent my carrying out the object of my trip. It was almost a miracle that nobody became suspicious.

At the beginning of 1918 a letter from "Polly" came through our office, of which I felt I had to get a copy through to Berlin. She described the peace negotiations in Brest-Litovsk, and was of opinion that Trotski and Lenin had succeeded in imposing their dangerous theories on the German diplomats. She went on to say that the plan of placing the entire command of the Allied forces in the hands of a Frenchman had led to serious

differences between Lloyd George and Sir William Robertson, the Chief of the British Imperial General Staff, and that Robertson's resignation might be expected at any moment. But, most important of all, she reported that a tremendous German offensive, greater than ever before attempted, was expected in the spring, since the armistice on the Russian front had freed enough German troops and material to be used for this purpose in the West. England had been splendidly served by its Intelligent Service and knew almost all the details of the scheme. Early in November a conference of the German commanders had taken place in Mons to discuss the chances of the various plans of this offensive. They had been given different code names. Sir Henry Wilson had said that the only thing the British General Staff did not yet know for certain was whether the plan "St. George I." or "Michael" was to be used. "Polly's" proved connections with the most influential and informed people removed all doubts in my mind as regards the facts that she reported. Now and again they lacked detail, and the opinions she gave as to the probable course of events did not always turn out as she predicted ; but she never made wild guesses, and what she stated as facts were facts. In this letter she also mentioned that a meeting of the Allied War Council had been summoned for January 30 in order to settle the

question of a commander-in-chief for the whole of the Allied forces. This conference would be held in Versailles, she said, and it all took place exactly as she had foretold.

This report drove me to London. I had reached the table where the mail of the country to which my window envelope was addressed was being censored, and had sat down next to the head of the table. I looked up quite by chance, and my heart stopped beating and then began to pound so madly that I imagined everyone must hear it. Opposite me a glass door stood ajar, and through a combination of circumstances showed me in reflection in the glass plate of this door standing open accidentally at exactly the right angle. As if far off, I saw an image of myself and at a table behind somebody who seemed to be watching me. It took every ounce of strength to pull myself together and to master the nervousness which suddenly threatened to overwhelm me. The letter was of the greatest importance, and if I could not get it through now there would be little chance of sending it in the near future. In the course of a few seemingly endless minutes it was slipped safely into a batch of mail already examined, and I was now free to leave the table. Then I turned round, glanced carelessly past the man who could now observe me quite closely, and moved off to another table from which I could see the batch containing

my letter being collected with others by post-office men, and taken out with the rest for dispatch.

As if in mockery, I was shortly afterwards promoted to the post of assistant-censor of my department, of which I had been for some time already acting as in charge. It was one of the most important positions in the Liverpool censorship. The promotion was accompanied by a very friendly personal letter from headquarters in London. A year earlier the very cordiality of this letter would have hurt me bitterly because of my consciousness of not deserving it. Since then I had become more callous. I had had to do too many things that went grossly against the grain. I knew how Germany was honeycombed with enemy agents. The enemy were men like ourselves, and I am sure that many Englishmen found their secret service duties just as repugnant as I did. Nevertheless, they did not doubt that they were doing the right thing because it was the job allotted to them.

My present post enabled me to see many confidential documents hitherto not easily available to me. *Embarrass des richesses*—and no possibility of using the information.

If the material was likely to be of value enough to be used after the War, I at least photographed it or made short notes of the contents. Luckily for me I could again use my Liverpool dark room. I had had to give it up for a while for reasons of safety. That

had been in May 1917, after one of those minor incidents that continuously kept one in a state of tension.

So as not to attract too much attention in the Liverpool shops by my unusually large consumption of photographic material, I had bought all I wanted as far as possible in London or in the shops in the towns or villages around Liverpool. One day, in a small shop in Manchester, I was subjected to a sort of mild cross-examination by its owner. Another customer who happened to be in the place also took part in the discussion. As I did not care to reveal my identity as a censorship official I showed my national registration, which stated that I lived in Liverpool and had voluntarily enlisted for military service. The owner of the shop seemed to be satisfied and sold me a few rolls of film, though rather less than I had asked for. The other customer went away, but as I was waiting at the station for my train back to Liverpool, he suddenly appeared, accompanied by another man in civilian clothes, who then got into my compartment. Later, the stranger started a conversation and soon began to talk about photography. He seemed to be quite interested in what I told him about over- and under-exposed negatives, and was pleased at some hints as to the best manner of taking portraits. On our arrival in Liverpool I noticed that the stranger was shadowing me. I therefore went straight to the club and saw that

he had taken up a position in a doorway opposite. Resolved to take the bull by the horns, I mentioned the matter to an acquaintance, an artillery officer, who happened to be in the smoking-room, and told one of the club servants to go across the road and ask the stranger to come in. He appeared in the hall and was now asked what he meant by following me. The man grew very confused and admitted that he had shadowed me on some vague suspicions. He apologized and was then given a whisky-and-soda and the advice not to try to himself play the detective in future, but to turn to the police or to the military authorities if any people he saw in the street should arouse his suspicions. He would get very much further and not run the risk of following a wild-goose chase as he had this evening !

This affair had caused me to give up my small photographic studio and dark room in Liverpool and to take all my materials to London, where I could work only now and again. I soon found that the loss of my Liverpool studio was a very serious matter indeed, so that after a few months I started it again, though, of course, in different quarters. Now it was a great help to me, and even if my work could not be used for the time being I was collecting material which might be of some value at a future date. At any rate, I felt that I was not idly guarding an altogether abandoned post.

THE TERRIBLE NET

WHEN the censorship was established in England only very few persons even there realized the full significance of this measure. The people as a whole looked upon it only in the light of an annoying but necessary restriction due to the exigencies of War. In reality it meant much more. Its masterly conception made of an apparently obvious and secondary organization perhaps one of the most powerful weapons in British hands, and one that was all the more dangerous to us because very few realized how abundant and never-failing a stream of information it provided, supplying England not only with military and political news, but also with such a fund of industrial and economic data as would be of the greatest possible value even after the conclusion of peace.

In the first few weeks of the War the censorship had primarily the task of cutting off all communication between Great Britain and the Central Powers, so that no news of military or naval importance could leak out to the enemy. This control was, of course, extended to all the other countries bordering on Germany and which could be looked upon as channels of communication.

A little later the censorship also laid its hands on all correspondence between neutral countries when it could get hold of it. International law, which hitherto had protected postal communication of non-belligerents, was no hindrance to Great Britain. It was not violated—but circumvented. What neutral ships were bound for northern European ports were simply all stopped and literally compelled to enter British ports, where the mail was impounded (for it was now in British territory !), taken to the nearest censorship offices, and only allowed to proceed after very careful examination. Only America—at least at the beginning—was handled somewhat less ruthlessly. The Allies also, at least officially, were exempt.

The London head office of the censorship had started work with a few examiners at the General Post Office in Mount Pleasant. It soon increased in size and moved to Salisbury House. In March 1915 the ever-growing office was moved again, this time to the “York” and “Imperial” Houses in Kingsway, and again, a year later, to an entire block of buildings in Carey Street, not far from the Strand. The functions of the censorship had been vastly expanded and the organization itself assumed such huge proportions that there was literally no room for it in any one building in London. The staff now numbered about three thousand seven hundred. The branch office in

Liverpool, which was opened at the end of 1915, also employed about one thousand five hundred persons. In addition, temporary branches were organized at certain strategical points in the British Empire, such as at Gibraltar and Alexandria, also in Folkestone. Besides, smaller units were established, which were sent from place to place as emergency demanded, not to mention the censorship offices at all the base camps and those for the mail of the prisoners of war.

After a time the entire correspondence of the world was thus caught up in the fine-meshed net of the British censorship. Nothing happened at home or abroad that was not known in England very soon afterwards. No opinion could be expressed by the peoples in the four corners of the earth, and no partizanship for or against the Allies could flame up or die without England's being informed. There was no business transaction planned or brought about, no connection formed that England could not either support or destroy as she should think fit. Knowledge is power. England's knowledge thus acquired became one of her mightiest weapons in the economic warfare and hunger blockade with which she forced Germany to her knees, and which was sharpened from day to day.

In spite of its importance, the censorship was only a branch of a still greater organization. It

was only a section of the department of Military Intelligence. The routine of handling letters was extraordinarily speedy, frictionless, and well thought out. The whole of the correspondence to and from abroad went first of all, just as did the inland correspondence, through the usual post office channels. After the censorship had finally moved to Carey Street, a special post office for foreign mail was fitted up, for the sake of convenience and quick dispatch, on the ground floor of the new building. Here letters were sorted according to the land from which they came or to which they were destined. The post office then handed them over to the Censor and took charge of them again after they had been examined, when it sent them on in the usual manner.

In the censorship itself, the letters were first sorted before opening. The first sorting department divided them into private and business letters as far as they could be determined as such by their outward appearance. After this general classification they came into another room. Here a number of ladies worked at long tables, each of which sections dealt with a special country. These women worked with the help of two lists. The "White List" contained the names and addresses of officers of high rank, of statesmen, members of the government and the diplomatic corps, as well as the unobtrusive cover names and

addresses used by the British Intelligence Service in London for the receipt of information from abroad. These letters were exempt from examination and at once given back to the post office to be sent on to the addressees. In the case of correspondence of the diplomatic corps, however, test examinations were secretly made from time to time. On the second list, the "Suspects List", were the names of all those persons at home of whom the authorities were uncertain, as well as of the enemy agents abroad.

Such letters were sent on to a special department, with facilities for examining correspondence for the presence of writing in secret inks, and where, if necessary, they could be so expertly opened that afterwards they would show no trace of their having been examined by the Censor.

Everything not included in these two lists came into the actual examining-rooms, there to be opened, read, and dealt with according to the nature of its contents. The mails of every country were always handled by the same groups of examiners, and within these groups the examiners were always given as nearly as possible the same districts, provinces, firms, branches of trade or industry, to deal with, so that in the course of time they became thoroughly familiar with all the transactions of particular persons and business houses. In this way the examiners could trace the connection

between seemingly unrelated facts, and were able to follow up the information.

Every group was in charge of a Deputy-Assistant Censor (D.A.C.), whose rank might be considered equal to that of captain. Ten or fifteen such groups were under an Assistant Censor (A.C.), who corresponded roughly in rank with that of a major. In addition, there were a number of specialists who did not belong to any department but who were used for their special knowledge of certain subjects. The highest officer was the Chief Censor (C.C.) who, with the help of several censors, ran the entire organization and regulated its relationship with the various ministries and the public.

Private correspondence was generally examined by ladies, who came mostly from the upper classes—the wives and daughters of officers, professional men, and higher officials, and who worked in accordance with exact instructions. They had, above all, to take care that no news went through which might injure the interests of Britain or the Allies. Any letter containing serious political or military indiscretions or remarks calculated to create disaffection, or gave information that might be of use to the enemy, had to be shown to the D.A.C., who decided whether to delete the passages or send the letter back to the writer with a warning. In graver cases it was submitted to the A.C., who

had to decide whether the military or police authorities should be informed, or the name and address of the sender or recipient be placed on the "Suspects List". Now and again suspicious letters were purposely allowed to pass so that the correspondents might imagine themselves unsuspected and make their surveillance all the easier.

Especial care was taken with letters containing photographs or pictures of any sort. These, without exception, were sent back to the sender in the United Kingdom, as were all picture postcards. The War Office had considered that it was impossible to determine whether a picture, even though it be only a snapshot, was harmless or might not serve as a sort of code. For this reason the sending of pictures abroad was absolutely forbidden.

Business letters were examined with an entirely different object in view. Every group consisted of about twenty-five or thirty examiners, who had to be well informed men. They had not only to know the language of the country with which they were dealing, but also its economical conditions and prevailing business practices. The method of examination was otherwise much the same as that of private letters. If an examiner found anything he considered suspicious, he made a note of it on a special form, and gave it, together with the letter and all other papers connected with it, to the D.A.C. If the latter agreed that the

suspensions of the examiner were well founded, he endorsed them and sent the whole to the Assistant Censor who had at his disposal, or could easily secure, all necessary confidential information and data relating to this firm or transaction.

All letters containing nothing of a harmful nature were closed with the "Opened by Censor" label of the examiner and then collected by the post office, where again they were sorted to make certain that all letters were securely closed and that only those came back that had originally been delivered to the Censor.

Only Assistant Censors had the right to make an exception and send on letters that had not come through the usual post office channels. Any such letters had to be closed with the personal label of the A.C. or bear a similar identifying mark. Generally it was a case of London banks or large firms which rang up that they had something of the greatest importance that must be sent off in hurry, and asked for permission, which was nearly always granted, to bring their letters straight down to the censorship for examination and forwarding from there. In these rare cases much time was saved, for the censorship as a whole was always ready to do everything to help British trade. For exceptional cases there were a whole series of special departments. One of these dealt with letters in uncommon languages, such as Chinese,

Armenian, and so on. The most interesting department treated all letters believed to contain code, or which might have passages written in invisible ink. These were examined by code-experts and experienced chemists.

A very large department was that for printed matter of all sorts. It was impossible to examine every book and magazine so as to make sure that certain letters or words were not pricked out or otherwise marked to send messages abroad. All publishing houses had, therefore, to obtain special permits from the Government to send their publications abroad, and these licenses were only granted to firms guaranteeing for every one of their employees, from the directors down to the humblest packer. As regards printed matter from abroad, this was only examined to make sure that its contents was not seditious.

All books and printed matter containing enemy propaganda, in whatever language, went to a special department, to be there minutely examined. One copy was kept at the Censor's office to be preserved in the rapidly growing enemy-propaganda library.

Letters from the British troops were censored in their units or at the base, and there was a special censorship department of all letters either to or from prisoners of war, whether they were British or German.

Whoever understood how to profit by it was getting in the censorship a course in practical psychology, economics, and commercial law such as no college could ever hope to offer. Every corner of the world's trade was thoroughly searched in order to find the centres of German interest and to destroy them. Nothing was too unimportant for consideration from this point of view. An ever-alert suspicion took every possibility into account. Was there a German firm behind the bankers' draft from that harmless Dutch trader in Java? Was any German capital invested in that factory in Spain which had ordered a shipment of American coal? Why had that wholesale dealer in Geneva bought rubber tubing from America? He had never done so before; it wasn't an article he usually handled. Did he now take it up to sell this rubber to Germany?

We were at the same time constantly on the look-out for information that might affect British interests. One letter would show that there was a danger of a strike in a factory in Norway, and that therefore certain supplies for the War Office might be delayed; another that unnecessary agents' commissions raised the price of special articles essential for the Navy, and so on *ad infinitum*. Every day new questions cropped up relating to banking, shipping, and insurance; the textile, metal, food, and chemical trades; about every

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branch of the entire commerce of the world, and all these had to be accurately and speedily answered. No small demand was made on the knowledge and the presence of mind of the examiners. Very often numerous details had to be remembered or collected from notes of previous correspondence in order to get a clear picture of what was the real purport of a certain important transaction. But it was done and there was no letting up till it was done.

As in a mighty mill, in which the cogwheels meet and grip with perfect precision, the censorship's wheels turned without stoppage: terrible, merciless, crushing and grinding German interests and German resistance with an uncanny, almost dramatic force.

The work in the different departments went on in that quiet and orderly, typically English manner in that so many people of about the same social level met daily in the course of their work and yet never got to know each other well, never trespassing upon that reserve with which each surrounded himself.

The examiners were partly ex-officers, from Captains to Generals, partly men from the banking and professional world—men who had all been on the continent before the War and had thus obtained more or less thorough and first-hand knowledge of the different countries, their languages, and customs.

At first the feeling among us was one of great

tension. The general mania for spy hunting had also infected all ranks of the censorship. Excited, eager examiners thought that every badly written letter contained some secret sign or code, giving away all England's most closely guarded military secrets. Letters were continually being submitted to the Deputy Assistant Censor, Major Z., as being very suspicious. He was an experienced staff-officer, with a wide knowledge of such matters, and, better still, a man of great tact and patience, who well knew how to calm down his subordinates without hurting their feelings or diminishing their interest in their duties in any way.

I learnt more from the short and instructive explanations given us by Major Z. than from the thousands of harmless Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian letters that passed through my hands at the beginning of my service.

I discovered that for years before the War a secret censorship had been in force to control the correspondence of a number of foreigners, not only Germans, but also Russians, Frenchmen and others suspected of living in England for the sole purpose of supplying their respective governments with information. When the War broke out, the British Intelligence Service was therefore able to at once lay hands on all such persons they wished to hold and about whose activities this secret censorship had provided ample evidence.

It was also known in certain English circles that since 1901 the so-called "green telegrams" sent by the German Ambassador in Paris had always been copied and placed at the disposal of the French Minister of War, which had also been in possession of the code in use at the time, and so could decipher them quite easily.

More interesting than the Scandinavian mail was the Swiss correspondence, to which, after a short time, I was assigned. Often these letters contained only casual references to the formation of new battalions, the district where they were being trained, the measures taken along the coasts to safeguard the transport of troops—generally quite disconnected voices from the general public ; and yet even I, a layman, slowly gained an ever-clearer insight into the military and political situation on both sides of the Channel. How immense must have been the harvest of information of the Government at whose disposal, from every department of the censorship, was placed a quintessential resumé, collated and annotated, and constantly kept up to date ?

One's interest in private letters, so long as they were harmless and ordinary, soon wore away after some weeks spent in a censor's office. The contents were always essentially the same. Only the names differed. In a weary round, the news of births and engagements, weddings and deaths, joys

and sorrows, passed like an endless monotonous panorama of life before one's eyes. One became perfectly indifferent to the family affairs of strangers, and forgot them the instant they had been read. This rapid sinking into oblivion afforded the greatest natural protection to correspondents.

By the beginning of 1915, when our office was moved to "York" and "Imperial" Houses, the whole routine of sorting and examination had been thoroughly reorganized, improved, and refined. Especially was the censorship of commercial correspondence tightened up, since its value for the economic warfare, which now began to be waged with all available resources, had become increasingly apparent. From that time on the censorship worked hand in hand with the Ministry of Blockade, which carried on its siege of the Central Powers with pitiless thoroughness and singleness of purpose.

In every phase of this blockade it was England's well-planned method to veil her policy at first, and so mislead the nations affected by it. When the world then began to see the real purpose of British measures it was usually too late for any counter moves. One manœuvre after another, carefully thought out and carried out with deadly precision, gradually caught the Central Powers as in a vice, at the same time crippling the commercial freedom of neutrals.

In Germany there was not only a lack of food, but also of raw materials of all sorts : leather, rubber, oil, cotton, camphor, wool and silk, of tin, and zinc ores, and numerous other minerals. At the very outset England had prevented the direct supply by sea. She was now trying to cut off Germany's supplies from the neutral neighbouring States. This was a difficult matter to achieve. Certainly all ships bound for European neutral countries were forced to enter British ports, where they were searched for contraband. It was not easy, however, in order to state the problem in its simplest terms, to determine either from the shipping documents or the cargo itself alone whether everything on board was solely what the importing country in question needed for her own consumption, or if part of it was intended for sale to the Central Powers.

Here was a loophole which might affect the entire purpose of the blockade ; in fact almost nullify it unless some means were found of stopping it. The stopper was found—the censorship. In course of time the censorship, with its finely meshed network, caught up sufficient information to be able to compile exact statistics of the imports as well as needs of every neutral country for every sort of raw material and manufactured goods, of the names of the importers, the quantities they had hitherto imported, and the amounts which they

could reasonably be expected to need for strictly home consumption. Further, it was not difficult to find out the political attitude of the owners and managers of such firms. Were they pro-Ally or pro-German? As most of the trade done between Europe and the rest of the world had previously been financed through the medium of English banks, it was quite easy for the British authorities to obtain exact data about all importers in neutral countries, as well as their usual customers.

As soon as the censorship learnt that a pro-German neutral firm was expecting a certain cargo from overseas the blockade authorities were informed. The ship was stopped on the grounds that it was suspected of carrying contraband, brought into a British port, and the whole matter submitted to a Prize Court which, of course, decided in England's favour if there seemed to be any doubt at all.

Even this control was not absolutely watertight ; besides, it was too complicated and causing too many delays. The British Government therefore tried to get the neutral states to join it in the economic war against us by asking them to prohibit their nationals the export to Germany or Austria. As they refused to yield to arguments England forced them to fall into line through the formation of "private" importing companies in all the neutral states bordering on

Germany, in spite of the vigorous protests and resistance of the outraged merchants. These companies were given the absolute import monopoly. They were under very strict British control, were closely rationed as to the quantities they might buy, and had to place large guarantees in the hands of the British Government that none of their imports nor any native products freed thereby should go to Germany. The same control was later imposed on the foreign exporters and ruthlessly enforced before the consignments were at all accepted for shipment. England thus had her hand on the throttle of the trade of the entire world, and refused or permitted shipments without bothering, as to whether her methods infringed the legal rights of others or not.

This economic war was waged all over the world with merciless rigour. No German undertaking was so small but it was worth England's while to destroy it. The German baker who was eking out a meagre existence in Chile was as little overlooked as the great wholesaler in Java.

Holland and the three Scandinavian States certainly desired to preserve a strict neutrality and to avoid being made to suffer with the belligerents. But England willed otherwise, and England was stronger.

The first "Private Import Company" was founded in Holland. It was the N.O.T. (Nederlandsche Overzeetrust Maatschapij) which was

compelled to give guarantees, and to agree to being fined up to five times the value of the goods if it allowed any imports to go on to Germany. In addition, it had not only to submit to a secret supervision over its affiliated Dutch firms, but was forced to organize and maintain such a control itself.

In May 1915 work was begun on "convincing" Denmark. Deliveries of coal from England were held up and cargoes of cotton from America kept back in British harbours. True, England was prepared to pay for the cotton—but the Danish mills could not spin with English pound notes ! In the end the various Guilds saw no other way out but to negotiate, that is to say, to accept England's terms and to deposit the guarantees about re-export ; and so control was established in Denmark.

In July of the same year it was Sweden's turn. Among other things, permission was demanded to send war materials through Sweden to Russia. Sweden refused to commit this gross breach of neutrality, and resisted all direct and indirect pressure. She could not, however, avoid having an "import company" established. Such a company existed—nominally as the transport agency "Transito"—from 1915. That a secret agreement existed with England showing it to be its creation did not become public knowledge till 1916.

Norway resisted like all the others, but was also forced into submission when the trade thumb-screws were put on. English capital was invested in the two chief industries of the country: paper mills and fisheries. This capital England threatened to withdraw at short notice. The Norwegian Government tried to parry this move by promising to grant loans to these enterprises threatened with ruin. England then began to capture Norwegian fishing-boats as suspected of intending to deliver their catch to the enemy. The Prize Courts would decide that "it was quite reasonable to suppose that this catch was intended for the enemy". Thereupon the British insurance companies refused to pay, and many law-suits were the results. Boats that really did sell their catch in German ports could not get any coal at all, till at last, in Stavanger, there were violent uproarious protest meetings against England and her disregard of the rights of neutrals. They might as well have protested against the earth's revolving around the sun. In the beginning of 1916 the usual agreements were signed, the control arranged, and the demanded guarantees paid into a bank.

Even Switzerland found that resistance was useless, and she, too, had to submit to the founding of the S.S.S. (*Societie Suisse de Surveillance*).

Poor Germany! On every battle-front it had

heroically defended itself against all its enemies. But how were our beleaguered people to withstand attacks directed against her at a front to which they had not even access ! Protests ? Who would have heeded them ? Diplomacy ? What diplomacy would not have been overtrumped by England ?

England was always meticulous in giving her proceedings a legal dress. Even palpable violation of international usage or right received its pretty drapery of legal form. If mails which had been summarily seized from ships at sea were brought to the Censor, a naval officer would always come before they were examined and solemnly declare them to be lawful prize. Everything was done most correctly. And whenever England was accused of infringements she would meet the objections of her opponents, if all other arguments had failed, with a very simple formula : "That is how we interpret the law." And that settled the matter.

In a mood of speculative abstraction a Foreign Office man is supposed to have said on one occasion : "If vitally necessary it could even be proved that the Holy Trinity consists of Four Persons."

The only country which England had to handle with circumspection was America, whose Government was determined to maintain formally a strict neutrality, until she herself declared war.

The United States could therefore not permit herself being accused of having silently acquiesced in the illegal practices of our enemies, and so they sent a Note in November 1915 to France and England protesting against the high-handed naval measures. It was a protest that looked very well on paper and met all the requirements of diplomatic procedure. Unofficially, however, a friendly understanding between America and England was arrived at closely on the heels of this protest, and the entire American correspondence, not only with the European States but with all the rest of the world, was left to the mercies of the British Censor. Everybody familiar with the machinery of the censorship knew it meant a relentless tightening of the blockade.

England lost no time. Throughout the War Liverpool was the only port open for passenger and postal traffic between America and England. Before the end of 1915 a special branch of the censorship was therefore established in Liverpool to deal with all the mail arriving from, or going to North and South America. This branch was accommodated in the buildings of the Harbour Board, and organized on exactly the same lines as the London office. The officer who had originally organized the censorship in Salisbury House in London, and later in Folkestone, was placed in charge.

The section for "registered mails", in which I had had to deal principally with questions relating to trade from the time of its being opened, was a complete censorship organization *en miniature*, with its separate rooms and its special post office. It was under the Deputy-Assistant Censor, who thus held the second most important position in the Liverpool censorship. We knew each other slightly, having met in London. He was a man of rare attainments and great charm of manner.

For the handling and examination of registered letters special instructions had been drawn up in keeping with the importance and value of their contents. The post office delivered these letters only against receipt. When they were returned from the censorship the procedure was reversed. The post office was responsible to the public for every letter as a whole, the censorship for its contents. The examiners had therefore to take careful note of all enclosures in each envelope, so as to be able to account for any discrepancies in case of complaints.

At first the general public were not aware that the American mail, too, had been placed under censorship, and thus a great deal was written which otherwise would certainly have been suppressed.

The correspondence from the South American countries showed very clearly how well British

merchants had organized their local economic war against everything and everyone who had anything to do with Germany. Throughout the length and breadth of the continent, in Buenos Aires and in Lima, in Santiago de Chile and in Rio de Janeiro, British traders were co-operating with each other to destroy German enterprise. They reported in detail, and very promptly, to the British authorities as to every cargo that reached German firms, about every transaction, every movement of the international as well as local trade, so that the blockade authorities at home could take the necessary steps and exercise their pressure where it would most easily tell. For instance : The tramways and electric light plant in Buenos Aires was a German enterprise. It was deprived of its coal supplies, and the owners were ultimately forced to sell their shares and sell them cheap. It was, at the same time, a good stroke of business for England. Thus British interests gradually acquired control of the vital industries of the country, with the result that to-day the value of British investments in the Argentine alone amounts to about eight hundred million pounds. German sugar-plantations in Bolivia and Peru were unable to obtain jute bags and were ruined. German and pro-German firms in Chile could find no way of shipping their guano, and so on.

Similarly surrounded and cut off as their people

in Europe, these Germans all over the world had to fight for a forlorn cause in a virtually lost battle. But they fought on, and that spirit of unity that in us Germans lies buried deep under layers of petty provincial individualism until some dire necessity arouses it, led them—even without hope of help—to try again and again to get into touch with those at home, if only to tell them that they, too, were holding out. But nearly all these attempts of communications got no farther than to the office of the British Censor. All sorts of ingenious methods were thought out and tried, but the Censor was more ingenious still.

In May 1917 a letter from a German officer, who wrote to his people at home from a prisoners of war camp in India, reached the London censorship. The contents seemed harmless enough. He wrote about his personal experiences: how sorry he was to be no longer able to fight shoulder to shoulder with his comrades in East Africa, that he had nearly recovered from the hardships of the campaign, and how splendidly he was being treated in India. This last sentence aroused the interest of the experienced and shrewd examiner. Prisoners of war were, of course, well treated, but certainly not “splendidly”. She submitted the letter to her D.A.C. with the remark: “When a Prussian officer neither complains about his treatment as prisoner of war, nor about his not being

provided with a batman, there is something wrong somewhere."

The letter was therefore tested by every method ; all without success. It was not until the envelope had been taken apart and as carefully examined as the letter that the answer to the riddle came to light. The whole of the inside of the envelope was covered with writing in invisible ink. The writer, who had belonged to Lettow-Vorbeck's forces, had apparently received orders during an engagement that if he were taken prisoner he should try to get a report through to Berlin as to the position of his comrades in East Africa, their prospects, and what their plans were for the future. The letter was placed in a brand new envelope and sent on to Germany. But the envelope with the valuable information was passed on to the War Office.

The new sources of information tapped by the censorship in Liverpool provided a never-ceasing stream of valuable data about the world's trade to the British Government.

And London made prompt and excellent use of them, partly by taking some immediate action against the Central Powers, partly augmenting its secret lists, statistics, and works of reference. The fine-spun mesh grew closer and closer every day, and the net itself was drawn ever tighter round our brave fighting men. In England one organization

after another grew up to utilize the material supplied by the censorship. The Department of Overseas Trade was founded for the support of British export, and changed after the War into the "B.F.I.", the British Federation of Industry, whose sphere of activity now includes the promotion of British trade all over the world. In addition to the "Enemy Traders List" (E.T.L.), strictly confidential "Who's Who" books were prepared about all pro-German neutral firms and constantly kept up to date by the issue of new supplements. These volumes contained often as much as 500 folio pages each, and were immediately placed at the disposal of British Consuls in all countries as well as of Assistant-Censors for their confidential use.

Every time I thought that really all measures which could possibly be taken against Germany had been employed, I was surprised by still another turn of the screw with which Britain tightened the blockade.

At an economic conference of the Allies held in Paris on June 14, 1916, it was decided to abandon the "Declaration of London" in which, before the War, the Powers had agreed on what was to be considered as contraband in war-time. In that declaration food, for instance, had not been included as contraband. But England had never signed or ratified this agreement. She now propounded the thesis that every import into a country

freed a corresponding quantity of native products which could then be used for war purposes, even if the import itself were not directly so employed. Food for the civilian population could therefore be looked upon as indirect contraband. This reasoning was unanimously accepted.

It meant the formal declaration of unrestricted trade warfare *à outrance*, relieved of all hampering conventions such as had hitherto been formally respected out of loyalty to treaties.

The next step was the issue and publication of the "Black List", containing the names of those pro-German neutral firms with whom all trade whatsoever was prohibited. In addition, there were other and larger lists, which were kept as secret as ever and only used by the different departments of the blockade authorities and the censorship.

In the autumn of 1916 the Assistant-Censor in charge of the Liverpool branch, which had been growing in importance every day, died suddenly, and was succeeded by an officer who had grown grey in the Indian Army. This officer at once began to make himself thoroughly familiar with all the details and ramifications of the smoothly running organization. In the beginning of 1917 my immediate superior officer was called up for active service, was attached to the Naval Intelligence Department and sent to Central

America, there to help British Consulates with his experience in the collection of information on the activities of German firms. He was also to find out if and where there were any German submarine bases, and how and by whom they were supplied with fuel and other necessities. Since I had been his deputy for over a year I was given his post in charge of the department for registered mails. This promotion gave me access to a great deal more information than I had had hitherto, especially about the various blockade measures then in force. Barring two men I had as my assistants, the staff consisted entirely of ladies, who carried out their duties with great ability, devotion, and sense of responsibility. Their being bound to secrecy was often put very severely to the test. The letters sometimes afforded glimpses of many a strange fate, and brought facts to light that were humanly as interesting as they were uncommon. Chance, too, sometimes played strange tricks.

One day an examiner read a letter which disclosed the fact that the husband of her newly married sister had another wife living in Canada. This Canadian lady was writing to acquaintances in England to find out what had become of her husband, of whom she was without a word ever since his leaving Ontario to rejoin his old regiment. The examiner, to whom this news had come as a great shock, wanted to know if she could tell her

parents about it. After consultation it was decided to inform the police authorities of this case of alleged bigamy. They would make all necessary enquiries and, no doubt, communicate with the parents. The examiner, however, was instructed not to say anything to them until she should be authorized to do so.

It was held that even so extraordinary a circumstance did not justify a breach of the obligation to secrecy with regard to anything contained in letters. It would have created a precedent that might easily have led to other violations.

Often cases of really desperate want and trouble were revealed in letters passing through our hands. They were always dealt with in a special manner—unofficially, of course. If a letter convinced us that the distress was genuine, and that immediate help was needed pending the appeal reaching its destination, a subscription would be quickly got up and a sum of money sent anonymously to tide the writer over for the time being. British prisoners of war were regularly supplied with parcels of food and small comforts out of a departmental fund created for this purpose.

The thoroughness with which the Assistant-Censor discharged his duties, and his attention to details which made him always go into every matter not quite clear to him, brought me almost daily in official contact with him, so that in time it

was only natural that we should get personally in closer touch with each other.

What under normal conditions would have been a most pleasant and delightful association, became now the source of an infinitely painful conflict of spirit. It is perhaps one of the deepest tragedies of war that in time it cannot remain impersonal like other catastrophes. From the mass 'enemy', personalities detach themselves to whom, as individuals, we feel ourselves irresistibly drawn in sympathy and affection. Yet these men are bound to their country as we are to ours and we must be at feud with them so long as a state of war exists. This is an old human law and perhaps the core of all national consciousness and cohesion.

War is no time for indulging in the luxury of personal feelings. It can, however, change even a sober thinking man into a casuist if he is constantly compelled to convince himself of the most contradictory propositions : right is no longer right ; wrong becomes a standard of action ; there is no room for personal decency and honesty in the exercise of some patriotic duties ; when necessity speaks, conscience—that most intimate counsellor and guide of one's self—must be silent.

The Assistant-Censor and his wife were most kind to me and invited me often to their home. My feelings rebelled against acceptance under the circumstances—my duty demanded that I did not

refuse. Of all the conflicts of those years this was the bitterest.

He was one of the finest and noblest men I have ever met in my life. He, himself a patriot in every fibre of his being, would have understood my position and my conduct and approved of them.

America's entry into the War gave the Allies a freer hand in every direction, and England's demands on neutral countries became sharper and sharper, amounting almost to a dictatorship. In the summer of 1917 Holland was peremptorily cut off from cable communication on the grounds that she had allowed Germany to ship sand and cement for the building of machine-gun nests in Belgium through Dutch waterways. The real reason was that there was a great shortage of quinine in Italy, and that Holland, which had nearly a monopoly of this drug, as it came chiefly from the Dutch East Indies, had made some difficulty about deliveries to England's Allies. Pressure on other countries, too, was exercised with less disguise than hitherto.

In the censorship all these happenings were seen in all their ramifications and were followed and watched as spectators watch the swift development of some stirring drama on the stage ; for detached observers a play of intense interest ; for a German, the spectacle of Germany's fall, a

terrible picture. There were times when one felt like envying the men in the trenches for their blind hope.

Shortly after New Year in 1918 the United States started a censorship of their own in Liverpool organized along the lines of the British. Two American officers were attached to our branch for a time in order to study its workings, and, when they started, a few of our most experienced examiners were lent to the American Censor's office as a nucleus of their new staff. This censorship, however, was only for the examination of letters to and from the American troops.

America's declaration of war had completed the isolation of the Central Powers. The net was closed and the blockade was like a wall round Germany and the countries on her side, and within these confines the Entente knew her best and most reliable ally at work—hunger. Hunger with its train : demoralization, despair, disintegration.

In England they kept exact statistics of the progress this invisible ally was making so brilliantly enlisted and employed.

Already, at the end of 1914, a letter from a highly placed officer to his wife had shown only too clearly that the British General Staff knew perfectly well how badly organized was the distribution of food in Germany, and how unprepared the country had been for the task of

feeding its civilian population. The censorship continued to keep England fully informed. One department of the Ministry of Blockade maintained astonishingly accurate statistics of the economic conditions in Germany. From week to week one could follow the curves showing the available supplies of food, and of the most important raw materials, such as copper, cotton, leather, and rubber. One could watch the meagre reserves of material, barely sufficient under normal conditions, gradually melting away, the rations for the storm troops diminish, see how much the men at the base were allowed, and how little was left for people at home.

Conclusions about the physical condition of the front line soldiers and of the reserves could be drawn from these figures. All captured German war materials were scientifically examined, and the deterioration of quality noted. The uniforms of prisoners of war showed how the material grew more shoddy and their equipment less reliable—all factors ultimately bound to weaken resistance.

On the other hand account was kept, as exactly as possible, of any accretion of material such as guns and supplies derived from our captures, principally in the campaign against Russia.

Up to the beginning of 1916 these statistics still had many gaps, but with the foundation of the "Private" Import Companies in neutral

countries and the severer control, they became more and more exact. Nothing was neglected, and it filled one with awe and horror to see how systematically the slow starvation of a people could be observed on these charts and figures.

A man I knew was for some time employed on compiling and collating statistics as to the amount of fats being imported into Germany. He had studied physiology at one time. He was a tall thin man with cold eyes grey and a thin mouth that lay like a gash across his face. We spoke about rations and calories, and one day he showed me his figures, curves and graphs. A starving people, starving troops at the front stared at me through these figures.

"Interesting," I said to him calmly.

"Yes," came the dry answer, "we'll muddle through the War somehow, but fat will win it for us."

He was right. All the successes of our arms were made to naught by the applied arithmetic of our enemies.

PROPAGANDA

EVEN to-day the poison is still working that Britain instilled into her terrible anti-German propaganda campaign, undermining our reputation and turning every nation of the world against us. We were branded as peace-breakers, mad with the lust for conquest and power, and the blood-guilt of the War was fastened on us.

The instant war broke out the British propaganda organization that already existed was expanded and turned to meet the newly arisen requirements. Its most intensive activity was directed toward the United States, where its task was to get in the first blow and to show that the cause of the Allies was indeed that of right and justice. Sir Gilbert Parker, one of the best known writers, was sent over to take charge of the campaign. He was a Canadian and knew a great deal about American affairs and American mentality. His assistants were experts in all matters pertaining to political propaganda.

Parker's object was, firstly, to destroy any sympathies for Germany which might be existent in America ; and, secondly, to keep the British Cabinet informed as to public opinion in the

States. His reports were augmented by the information obtained from the censorship, so that the Foreign Office in London always had its finger on the pulse-beat of America's main currents of thought.

Money was of no consideration ; Parker's organization was supplied with everything it could possibly need. And it did not economise. A news sheet offering a wealth of material and written up by the ablest journalists was sent every week free of charge to three hundred and sixty American newspapers. It contained interviews with English and French statesmen, symposiums of well-known men and women, and a mass of up-to-the-minute, striking matter calculated to keep at white heat the interest in the War in the minds of American reading public, and to convince it that England's cause was solely the cause of the weak—of poor little Belgium.

Institutes, clubs, and associations were showered with pamphlets telling about the grit and determination of the small British Army and the power of the Navy. Socially prominent people travelled all over the States to give lectures on all kinds of subjects, but with always this substance : England and her Allies were fighting for the sacred cause of right and justice. Letters were written to draw well-known and popular Americans into discussion, and their replies, if favourable, were given to the newspapers. American authors were encouraged

to write about the War and the events leading to it, and were supplied with all conceivable data and material for this purpose. The people were, so to speak, almost individually handled and whipped into line.

The propaganda was carried out so thoroughly, and was spread so well and widely, that we Germans, the enemy, scarcely came to a word. Britain had, moreover, the advantage of a common language, and so was able to make use of the colleges and universities, and the popular Young Men's Christian Association, and could thus reach the big middle classes and suggest to them in the guise of impartial news about the War that England's cause was the cause of right. Later, when America entered the War, her Government used its own perfect propaganda organization to stir the masses and to spur them on to greater and greater efforts and sacrifices.

This propaganda campaign was carried on in all the other neutral countries with the same skill and energy: in the Allied countries, in Great Britain itself, and even in Germany. And it was brilliantly done in the usual English time-tested manner. The wonderful preparedness and masterly organization of the German Army were praised to the skies, and contrasted at the same time with the absolute unpreparedness of Britain. A traditional never failing method calculated to

impress the world with the heights to which British resource and courage can rise in face of danger and need.

Over a million words of "war-news" were cabled to all foreign countries by Reuter's agency every month. This is roughly as much as is contained in one volume of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. About four hundred articles in different languages were sent every week to foreign newspapers and magazines. The propaganda department published Spanish, Portuguese, and Greek magazines every fortnight, and newspapers for the Far East printed in six different Oriental languages. *War Pictorial* appeared in eight editions every month, each of seven hundred thousand copies. British war films were shown all over the world. In every neutral and Allied country news agencies were established to distribute, according to plan, the material supplied by the central organization.

Behind the lines in France, the British Government had equipped three large mansions for the reception of foreign guests, who were treated with every possible consideration, and shown everything of interest, and who, when they got back to their own countries, generally proved to be the best propaganda agents for England's cause. One of these mansions was for Americans only, the second for guests from other countries, and the third for journalists. The three groups of visitors

were always kept apart, each handled individually, and the hospitality nicely adjusted to the mentality of each, so that the most favourable impressions might be produced.

From the very beginning of the War hundreds of anti-German papers and pamphlets were published in all the neutral countries, some hinting vaguely at all kinds of horrors, some bluntly charging the German troops with the most brutal atrocities conceivable. In the autumn of 1914 a letter from a Swiss publisher came through the censorship in which he wrote to a business friend in London that the issue of a certain anti-German propaganda book in Switzerland would certainly not mean a loss since P. was behind it. At that time P. was on the staff of the legation in London.

It was assumed, and rightly so, that the members of the neutral embassies and legations who were in London during the War were all pro-Ally in their sympathies; but participation in anti-German activities was certainly not in accordance with neutrality.

In Italy, British propaganda had no easy task, for here it had actually to influence the Government and the people to turn against their former friends and to make common cause with the Allies. The first real glimpse of what was going on behind the scenes in Rome was revealed at the beginning of 1915 in several letters written by the wife of a

British diplomat to her relations in England. She described in detail the enormous efforts that were being made to win Italy over. Quite different methods were employed from those used in Republican America, where the mass of the population had to be treated almost individually. In Italy, propaganda was not so much addressed to the masses as concentrated upon the upper classes, since the Italian people are accustomed to follow their leaders.

Society in Rome was divided roughly into two sections, one revolving around the Vatican, the other around the Quirinal, the "black" and the "white" wings. Since England was a Protestant country and Austria the greatest Catholic nation in Europe, it was believed that the Pope was more inclined than the Royal Court to favour the Central Powers ; at least he was considered to be strictly neutral. Of the Ministers, Giolitti was for neutrality, and Sonnino and Salandra for war on the side of the Allies.

The Allies' effort now was to win over to its side this divided society, so that it could bring pressure to bear on the undecided government, and so on the masses. It was a battle fought in the drawing-rooms with all the skill and subtlety the contending diplomats could command. On the one side was Sir Rennel Rodd, supported by the French and Russian ambassadors and the

Serbian minister, and on the other, Prince Bülow, with the representatives of the Central Powers, including their envoys to the Vatican.

Her brilliant descriptions of this diplomatic struggle were as interesting as they were instructive. She made no secret of the fact that England was fully prepared to make use of the economic thumb-screw, and would, if necessary, stop the import of cotton, coal, grain, and other important raw materials unless Italy could be brought by suasion to realize her true destiny in the concert of nations. Most illuminating were the little hints revealing clearly the ingenious methods employed to envelop the most important personages in a web of social amenity and, through them, bring the Italian newspapers over to the Allies' way of thinking, without apparently exercising any improper influence. The Englishman knows perfectly well that it is often much more effective to pay for services in the currency of social prestige than in that of the realm. When necessity demands it, he can place himself on a flattering level of equality even with those whom ordinarily he would ignore.

Within the British Empire propaganda was most skilfully designed to suit each separate Dominion and Colony, so that all the people under the Union Jack were welded into one mighty unit, animated by but one thought and desire : to

help the Motherland in the fight for "right and justice" against the hordes of an inhuman enemy.

In England itself a stirring campaign of bitter hatred was launched, to rage through the entire Press. Their columns were full of the bestialities German soldiers were supposed to have committed against the women and children in the occupied territories. It was described with every revolting detail how the enemy had crucified wounded British soldiers who had fallen into their hands, and had laughed and jeered at them. There seemed to be no end to the recitals of German atrocities and frightfulness with which the papers tried to overbid each other.

It was with amazement that one read these mixtures of lies and hysterical hatred which the enemies of Germany employed against her. But it also led one to a kind of sober reflection and realization, gaining daily in strength, which, acting as a counterweight, culminated in the conviction : This was not the way of a people, conscious of the justice of their cause, going to court with clean hands to prove before the bar of the world that we alone and not they were responsible for the War. They would not have taken recourse to such ignoble means to give expression to their righteous wrath. No. In order to make this at all credible we had to be defamed and painted as beasts, to be exterminated if there were to be peace in the

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world. The printed word, speech and pictures, science, art and literature, all were pressed into this propaganda.

One of the most vitriolic of all the men who attacked us in this manner was the Flemish artist Raemaker, who had already made a name for himself with his clever drawings for Belgian and Dutch newspapers, and who now placed his services at the disposal of the propaganda for the Allies. A venomous hatred, a powerful imagination combined with real talent, was here working against us. With an unerring touch he picked out gruesome and abhorrent episodes from the War and with a few sure strokes made them bitinglv vivid. It was just this seeming banality which produced such results—as though he were presenting merely the naked truth, letting her speak with pitiless effect.

In one of his pictures there was nothing but the dreary vista of No Man's Land and a dead soldier caught in the barbed wire. The memory of this limp bundle of human suffering etched itself into the minds of millions. Every week the newspapers and magazines bought sketches of whose existence probably only a few in Germany were aware, but which made an overwhelmingly deep and lasting impression on the public. Pictures strike deeper than words, and thus Raemaker did us probably more harm in his way

than volumes of British propaganda literature. And the feeling of bitterness against us that still persists in England is perhaps due to the impression these drawings left.

At first a section of the educated classes remained sceptical about these tales and reports of atrocities committed by German soldiers. But they, too, changed their minds when, at the end of 1914, the findings of a Commission of Enquiry under the chairmanship of Lord Brice was published. This Commission had been sent over to the continent for the express purpose of investigating the truth of these unbelievable statements about German frightfulness. This report was a masterpiece of clever presentation of their material. It produced the effect of being the rendition of what the witnesses had actually experienced, whereas, in fact, the testimony had not been subjected to that scrutiny it would have received in any English court of law. It repeated the phantastic inventions currently believed, giving them at the same time the weight of official confirmation. Lord Brice was no ordinary person, but justly held in the highest esteem as a high-minded and most honourable man ; what he said was so, and a feeling of horror swept over the whole world.

In the autumn of 1915 the English nurse, Miss Edith Cavell, was shot. When Brussels was occupied by the Germans she was allowed to

remain on with the wounded to continue her duties. She had then, however, become a member of a secret organization which had taken on the task of smuggling Belgian civilians fit for military duties or escaped prisoners of war through the German lines to Holland so that they could join their compatriots in other parts of Belgium. This ardent patriot carried out her dangerous duties with great devotion and courage, and certainly helped many men over the border. It is equally certain that she sent out news of the movements of German troops and other vital information through these escaping Belgians. She was betrayed and caught. There can be no question but that the sentence of death that was passed upon her was legally justified. Military leaders bear a great responsibility for the safety of their troops and dare not to be afraid of taking drastic measures, however distasteful to them.

Politically it would have been wiser, after sentence on Nurse Cavell had been passed, to have commuted it to one of imprisonment, as England had done so frequently even with men of inferior texture of character. Miss Cavell, moreover, was a gentlewoman who had acted not for gain but from the noblest of all motives, patriotism ; and in prison she certainly could have done us no further harm. Moreover, both the American and the Spanish Ambassadors, Brand Whitlock and the

Marquis de Villaobar, had interceded for her—and presumably not without the knowledge and consent of their respective governments. A little understanding, the exercise of the prerogative of mercy on Germany's part, would certainly have been appreciated not only by the enemy, but also by two of the most important neutral nations. Instead, we made a martyr who harmed Germany far more by her death than she could ever have done had she been allowed to live.

Miss Cavell's tragic fate made a tremendous impression on the British people. In every town memorial services were held for her. The most impressive of these was in St. Paul's Cathedral, to a vast congregation, in the presence of the King and Queen, and of representatives of all the civil, naval and military authorities. The unselfish patriotism of a woman who had given her life in the service of her country was honoured in a fitting manner. Later a monument was erected to her in one of the busiest streets of London, near Trafalgar Square, and the King and Queen were present at the unveiling. This was the first time in the history of the world that a member of the Intelligence Service was publicly so honoured.

The propaganda organizations of the Allies, as well as those in America, took quick advantage of this material for a fresh onslaught against Germany, and used the Cavell case as a peg on which to

hang a campaign of bitterest vituperation. We were a nation of Huns that deserved to be wiped out and forgotten. Never in the whole course of the War were such burning articles written as at this time. And—as a consequence of this campaign an interesting observation could be made—never in the whole course of the War had so many men enlisted in the British Army as in the weeks following the death of Miss Cavell.

The word “barbarian” became a synonym for German at a time when the Allies themselves practised ruthlessly the very thing they condemned. England, by its food blockade, was killing infants by the thousands ; France, drunk with hate, was putting black troops in the field whose brutality was on a plane with that of the Poles, who differed but little from them except in colour.

Great pains were taken to associate the words “Hun” and “Barbarian” for ever with “German”. Not a single minor event and not one possibility was neglected that might help in this aim. Every operation we carried out and every military measure we had to take, with its unavoidable severity, was distorted and presented as evidence of the natural bestiality and depravity of the German people.

In the summer of 1916 the censorship received instructions to suppress any details of the effect of the Zeppelin raids and the damage caused by

German bombs. The captains of the German airships were to be given no opportunity, if it could be helped, of finding out if they had hit the places intended, or whether the bombs used were suitable for their purpose. Letters were only allowed to mention such items as had been released for general publication by the Press Censor. The newspapers, however, used this for propaganda, publishing article after article to the point that the German air raids were nothing but a useless form of barbarism, aimed under the pretext of military operations at women and children.

Places of real military importance were, indeed, seldom if ever hit. The brutality of these raids was emphasized, otherwise they were treated as of no consequence, and great care was taken that their effect on the civilian population should not become known to the world at large. As a matter of fact, the effects produced by the Zeppelins were greatly over-rated in Germany. The public was naturally uneasy, and this uneasiness sometimes rose to fever point at the moment of an actual raid, but it never went so far that the morale of the people or the will to victory was seriously affected in any way.

If it were a question of keeping the popular interest centred on the needs and exigencies of war, propaganda did not shrink from attacking even England's own great men. In 1915 a

campaign was launched against Lord Kitchener, the Secretary of State for War, because he had not responded sufficiently early to the demands made by responsible Generals at the front to supply the Army with high-explosive shells.

Of course questions of ammunition supplies, their manufacture, composition and improvement, were at that time of supreme importance, and the subject of many controversies. A great deal of very interesting correspondence in this connection went through the hands of the Censor. Especially instructive were the letters of a chemist employed at that time at the works of the great firm of Brunner Mond, and who seemed to hold a responsible position. He wrote to a friend at Montreux about his work and experiments. Complicated formulas, which one could not understand but which seemed to hide something terrible, were to be found in every letter. What did it mean, for instance, that they were beginning to manufacture large quantities of acetophenol chloride and dichlor diethylsulphide? It was days before I discovered that these materials were intended for gas-attacks and gas-shells. One invention chased another, and everywhere experimenters were hard at work. The more destructive the weapon, the quicker the War would be over and the slaughter cease. That served as justification for all the belligerents.

Lord Kitchener did not appear to have taken advantage of all that science and recent experience in the field had offered. The supply of munitions in quantity, as well as in type, fell short of the requirements, and General French, the commander-in-chief of the British Expeditionary Force, enlisted the help of Colonel Repington, the military correspondent of *The Times*, to overcome Kitchener's inertia. A savage propaganda campaign against him was launched by the Northcliffe Press and aroused the public as well as the authorities. Sweeping changes in the whole organization of munition-supply were the result.

With exactly the same ruthlessness, the Press had turned on the Prime Minister, Asquith, as the intensity of his anti-German feelings appeared to be open to question. In December 1916, on the eve of important changes in the Government, when it was only a question of days before Asquith would resign and hand over the reins to Lloyd George, the propaganda against the Prime Minister and his Cabinet reached their culminating point.

As nothing could be found against Asquith himself, his wife was made the target and charged with being a pro-German. It was alleged that she was visiting the German officers who were prisoners of war at Donnington Hall, bringing and sending them luxuries. There was not a grain of truth in these assertions—but the propaganda attained its

object : Public feeling against the Asquiths rose to fever heat, and Asquith's fall was sealed. And what were the facts underlying this campaign of lies? The fact that a harmless old German lady, who had lived in England since her youth, and been employed in the Asquith household for years, had been kept on after the outbreak of the War !

Perhaps the whole of even this propaganda would have been in vain if the Central Powers would have continued to stand together shoulder to shoulder and prevented its seeping into their ranks. But as soon as the enemy discovered how weak our union really was, and thought the time ripe for such a measure, a special section was established under the nominal leadership of Lord Northcliffe for the sole purpose of conducting propaganda in Germany itself, in Austria, occupied Belgium, Bulgaria, and Turkey, with the object of undermining the morale of the weary troops and the hungry civilian population. In London thousands and hundreds of thousands of pamphlets were prepared in all the languages of the Central Powers, sent to the Continent, smuggled behind our lines and distributed. For a long time nobody suspected their true origin. It was thought that the authors of these false, utterly disheartening leaflets were Germans, and large sections of the people succumbed to their influence after reading them. The enemy lacked neither

money to carry out their plans, nor daring agents, speaking the necessary languages perfectly, who entered Germany from Denmark, Holland, or Switzerland, and under the guise of responsible and enlightened informants, succeeded in discouraging the people, weakening their will to resist, and, worst of all, stirring up discontent among the workers and causing strikes in munition factories.

No matter how one may judge the ethics of such propaganda methods, how unscrupulous they may seem to us, who suffered from them, and still suffer from their after-effects—one cannot deny them a bigness of conception, a certain grandeur. In applying them Britain considered only its interests and how to further it. Looking neither to the right nor to the left, shrinking back from no consequence, England pursued its course with unerring purposefulness and—was successful. Though these methods may never appeal to us to imitate them in all points, we can certainly learn a great deal from them.

In the twenty-second volume of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, thirteenth edition, 1922, there is an article dealing with the whole question of the theory and practice of war propaganda. Its author, formerly a liaison officer between the War Office and the official propaganda department, who certainly may be presumed to know his

subject from A to Z, describes its basic principles with a candour that sounds almost cynical. Referring to British propaganda, he says :

Truth is valuable only as far as it is effective. The whole truth would generally be superfluous and almost always misleading ; the selections made range from a high percentage to a minus quantity. . . . Although truth may thus be irrelevant to the success of a propaganda, it does not follow that those engaged in it are consciously unethical. Doubtless, in every effort to control opinion there are persons either indifferent to justification or who justify the means by the end. But the more the emotions are excited, whether by patriotism or by cupidity, by pride or by pity, the more the critical faculties are inhibited. . . . The suspicions aroused by an admitted propaganda lessen its effectiveness, from which follows that much of the work had to be furtive. . . .

The detached, coolly impersonal note in this semi-official article lends it almost a touch of serenity. The opinion of the masses is more easily influenced by suggestion than by the truth. This is a matter of age-old experience. England makes no bones about it but calls a spade a spade.

The ancients knew already about two of the elements that must be present in a successful war propaganda. An ideal must be set up, and a hatred instilled against the enemy that threatens this ideal. The classical example of such a systematic influencing of the people is found in the preaching of the children's crusade, when the Church understood how to arouse the whole of Christendom to unheard-of efforts and sacrifices

which have never since been equalled. A sacred frenzy was unleashed and tens of thousands of mothers gave up their boys and girls to help fight the Turks and Saracens. At that time, too, an ideal was held up: the freeing of the Holy Sepulchre and its restoration to the Church—and hate was preached against the heathen, who were masters in the Holy Land, and who, perfectly reasonably, did not want to give it up. If one considers the primitive means of propaganda at the disposal of the Church in those days and compares them with all the possibilities of our own, which, as aid to the spoken word, has the help of the printing press, film, wireless, and the telegraph, it is obvious that the apparatus has been improved, but the methods have remained the same.

The extraordinary success of the British propaganda was based on the skilled application of these well-tried principles to modern conditions. To bring the people to the point of making the tremendous sacrifices demanded of them they had to be goaded into a state of bitterest hatred against individuals or groups of persons, not against any abstract idea.

This was the reason why the British newspapers were full of accounts of unspeakable atrocities committed by German soldiers and of the lust of conquest of their leaders. It was in obedience to the same principle that England was made to

appear in the light of the chivalrous defender of the weak and the instrument of avenging justice. Whereas British propaganda scored wherever it hit, an evil star seemed to hover over all the efforts made by the corresponding German departments. We were neither clever at it nor fortunate. Even within the limits set by our conception of what were the utmost lengths to which one might go, our propaganda was hopelessly insufficient and the organization for it inadequate. Its importance had been too long underrated in Germany to be made a strong weapon at a moment's notice.

Especially in the United States, whose goodwill was so all-important for us, flagrant mistakes were committed from the very beginning. And this in spite of the fact that a number of very able Americans who sympathized with us did their best to put the German case before their people. There were also experienced journalists in the States who were working for the German newspapers as editors and reporters, and eager and willing to do their utmost to help their native country. They had, however, always been so exclusively in touch with the German-speaking part of the population that the Anglo-Saxon mind was still a closed book to them. Nor did they understand the real art of propaganda. Their work proclaimed itself at the first glance as obviously written in pro-German interests. To

cite only one glaring example : almost immediately after the outbreak of the War a magazine was published called *The Fatherland*, of about the same size and appearance as the *Saturday Evening Post*, that queen of all weeklies. If the choice of so similar a form and make-up was the first mistake, the name given it was the second. A more unsuitable title could not have been found, since it clearly brand-marked the magazine as having been brought out in support of Germany, whose cause could never be a popular one in a country so overwhelmingly Anglo-Saxon in habits of mind and tradition. This was in diametrical opposition to the first principle of propaganda in that it cannot be effective if it at once arouses inhibitions and resistances. Propaganda of this type should be so interesting and so grip people's minds that they do not recognize it as such at all. Nor was this the only mistake made.

Our isolation, the censorship, and the blockade all did their part in preventing the German efforts at propaganda being effective. Our pamphlets were sent out haphazard, without certainty that they would ever reach their destination, and it was never really known whether they had arrived or not. We had no chance of finding out or of observing whether they were producing an impression at all, so that their form and character could be modified to meet other requirements.

We did not even always get to know what was being said about us, and had, therefore, little or no opportunity of refuting the innumerable statements of our enemies. Thus British propaganda was practically unopposed to mould the mind of the world. The few opportunities that were still open to us for counter-measures were often enough dissipated by our own stupidity.

There was, for instance, the unforgivable mistake of Dr. Dumba, the Austro-Hungarian Ambasad^{or} at Washington. It led to very grave complications in the autumn of 1915. Our diplomatic representatives in the United States ought to have known all about the strictness of the British censorship, and the methodical examination of all travellers and their luggage, to which they had to submit when arriving in England, or at an English port—particularly if they were suspected. In spite of this knowledge the Austrian Ambassador was naïve enough to believe that he could send highly confidential communications to Vienna via England, by a person who was already known as a pro-German. This was an American journalist who had been in Germany and Austria during the first few months of the War, and had written a series of pro-German articles for American newspapers as soon as he had returned home. The Allied authorities had noted his name as unfriendly. In 1915 he was again on his way to

Germany via Holland. His family was with him. The ship on which he sailed was forced, as usual, to call at a British port.

This opportunity was taken to examine his luggage and even to make a thorough personal visitation. First of all a letter was found from a Silesian journalist to his people at home, wherein he described in detail the propaganda work he was doing in the United States. But the big find was a very compromising letter from Dr. Dumba to his Government.

It is true the letter was in code, but it was not very difficult for the British authorities to decipher it. Dr. Dumba reported on the measures that he had adopted and the steps he was going to take to prevent, as far as he could, the manufacture of arms and munitions for the Allies which was going on in different towns of Pennsylvania, and specially in the huge steel works at Bethlehem and Pittsburg. He demanded financial assistance in order to organize strikes among the Slovakian labourers at these plants.

If we had actually looked about for some means of placing in England's hand material with which to inflame official as well as popular opinion in the United States against the Central Powers at this critical period we could hardly have chosen anything more suitable. The publication of this letter aroused a storm of indignation in

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America. The United States Government gave Dr. Dumba his passport, and he was forced to return to Austria.

In Switzerland also our efforts at propaganda had very little success. In the autumn of 1916, for instance, a German U-boat film was shown there. The courage and devotion to duty of U-boat officers and crews were well known. In this film, however, the Swiss, who were themselves rather the innocent sufferers of the general restrictions to trade, only saw how cargo boats were sunk—perhaps the very vessels that were carrying foodstuffs and other badly needed merchandise destined for Switzerland! Far from creating a sentiment favourable to the German cause by showing these pictures of our men engaged in their desperate life and death struggle in the defence of their country against a better-equipped enemy, they had quite the contrary effect. The film produced the impression that this submarine warfare was the sole cause of the rise in prices and shortage of essential commodities.

A British propaganda film shown later offered quite another spectacle. It gave pictures of troops playing football behind the lines; of columns and columns of men marching to the front, singing as they went; of huge depots of supplies and munitions everywhere in France; of the way German prisoners of war and wounded were

treated with a rough sort of friendliness that emphasized the natural chivalry the individual Englishman always shows his beaten foe. There was not one picture of destruction or sudden death. The whole film impressed one with the sporting instinct, the human qualities of the British troops, and the almost limitless resources behind them. The German film showed the face of war, with all its rough and terrible consequences—a true picture, but not good propaganda ; the British was admirably adjusted to the mentality of the spectator, and proved itself impressive, reassuring. Ours was a total failure.

A distinguished American publicist summed up in a very striking manner the chief causes for this failure of which the purely physical were by no means decisive :

For the debacle of German propaganda in the United States several reasons may be assigned. The British controlled the cables. Then there was the barrier of speech, and there was also that notorious inflexibility of the German mentality in its contact with the mind of other people. The Germans were very indelicate in the use of money, very gullible . . . very excitable in argument, and strangely infatuated with the idea of concealing themselves behind so called organizations.

Propaganda has probably been looked upon in Germany too long as something blatant ; useful perhaps to influence the simple and untutored, but not to be employed seriously on a big scale as a means of defence in so vital a conflict. It

has been treated much in the same manner as the Intelligence Service—as a sort of Cinderella, very likely because of the secrecy that must necessarily surround much of it. We only discovered too late that it calls for the exercise of the best brains in the country, requiring sagacity, experience, imagination, learning. While Germany was still theorizing as to whether propaganda was ethical or not, America had developed it into a practical science and England into a great art.

WAR SPIRIT AND CONSCRIPTION

IN October 1914 London was still in the early stages of war fever. The people had not yet begun to realize what war meant. To the average Englishman it still seemed like some contest of strength on a tremendous scale, but as something happening outside of himself and not affecting his innermost being. England had made many wars. They had usually been fought in Africa or India, and the people only got a glimpse of them when the victorious troops returned home, with bands playing and colours flying. And those troops, supported by a far-sighted and strong policy, had always won. They were volunteer soldiers, who had chosen the Army as their profession, or had joined from love of adventure or excitement. Nobody could be forced into military service. England was not a military state and conscription a thing unknown.

The British Government, therefore, did not want to disquieten the people at the start, but rather accustom them by degrees to the idea that this war was quite something else: that it was a fight for its very existence, in which everybody might be called upon to make sacrifices hitherto undreamt

of. As yet everything still went its usual way; posters on shops bore the legend "business as usual", as a sign that not even war could ruffle the calm of Englishmen. It was not until these inscriptions began to offend the public, in view of the huge casualty lists, that their removal was ordered.

Then the people began to grow uneasy. Belgian refugees, with their wives and families, were pouring in with every train, and soon the cheap boarding-houses and the large, hurriedly equipped shelters for those without means were full of them. The growing nervous tension discharged itself at first in a fever of spy-hunting, encouraged by the Government, because it was useful and induced the public to be careful and watchful.

The Press took up the theme, and insisted daily that England was simply honeycombed with German spies, since the absolutely unprepared country had never troubled to register and control the comings, goings and doings of its large foreign population. Only those initiated were aware that behind the apparent negligence a wonderful organization had long since been created, capable of laying hands, whenever it wished, on any person, foreigner or native. Whoever imagined that the British were rather superficial made a fatal mistake.

The defensive measures now put in force were strict, the regulations precise, and their transgressions promptly and severely punished. Not

one of the denunciations that came pouring in to Scotland Yard was ignored, no matter how absurd it may have seemed to be, for the fear of spies became more and more hysterical in every belligerent country. The most fantastic rumours were current and were believed, and the slightest eccentricity aroused suspicions. In the Savoy Hotel a Swiss waiter, who was seen sketching on a menu card the arrangement of the tables he was serving, was denounced to the police and at once examined as to whether or not he had been drawing plans of military importance. A factory building with a flat roof, which lay rather above the level of the town, was suspected of having been built by cunning Germans to serve in case of war as gun emplacements, simply because the owner of the factory had had dealings with Germany before the War and some German capital was said to be invested in the plant. We were credited with cunning, skill, and accomplishments which, unfortunately, only existed in the imagination of the enemy writers.

Almost immediately after the outbreak of War all those persons in England who were not of British nationality were divided into three classes : enemy, friendly, and neutral aliens. The first were interned at once as being citizens of the Central Powers, or else placed under very sharp surveillance. The others were also compelled to

register with the police and to provide themselves with cards of identity on the basis of passports issued by their respective embassies. Only British subjects were exempt from all these regulations. They carried their own passports in their speech, passports which could not be forged, since no adult can ever learn to speak English so free from accent that his pronunciation will not mark him as a foreigner. The English are often called unmusical, but they have an unusually fine and sensitive ear for every shade of accent and dialect.

Gradually the immensity of the struggle began to dawn on the people of England, and the danger in the offing. The army of volunteers was hopelessly outnumbered. The country called on its men to enlist. Still without any compulsion. But on street corners, and at all the most frequented centres, recruiting sergeants were trying to persuade the young men they saw to enter the Army. Every hoarding bore large posters appealing for volunteers, posters that exercised a certain pressure. "Kitchener Needs You" was the best known of all. Kitchener was the Englishman's idol. Silent, stern, fair, and successful, he was the very embodiment of an ideal military leader.

But the practical results of this propaganda were not sufficient to supply the man power needed. The country was calling, but the people were not responding in large enough numbers.

WAR SPIRIT AND CONSCRIPTION 169

Of course, of the upper classes more men had volunteered at the outbreak of War than the regiments could possibly absorb, and they had impatiently to await their turn. But the masses held back. Everyone wanted his neighbour to go first. The married man was of the opinion that the bachelors should all join up before he enlisted.

In the end both private firms and the many communal and Government departments exerted a great deal of pressure on their staffs, and in this way a large number of volunteers was obtained. Many a company offered to continue the full or partial payment of wages whilst in the Army as an inducement to the men to enlist. That no one thought the War was going to last four years does not affect the generosity of these offers.

The apathy of the masses was in no way due to personal cowardice. It was more a matter of temperament and habit of thought. For wherever British troops fought they have fought bravely and well, and—one must give the enemy his due—they treated their prisoners humanely and without that sadistic hatred to which their French Allies were so given, and which has sullied them for all time. Nor was it that they condemned the War as such or were disinterested in it. It was rather a state of mind, an attitude solely due to the fact that the security of England itself had hitherto never been seriously threatened. The feeling of

being constantly in danger had, therefore, not impregnated the national consciousness of the people as a whole. The idea that a contingency might arise requiring every able-bodied man to offer even his life in the defence of his country had never occurred to them.

In every other direction the readiness for sacrifice was prompt. Everyone did his bit, and more than his bit, gladly and willingly. Hundreds of great and small organizations grew up like mushrooms overnight to help the Government in any way they might suggest. The Y.M.C.A. rendered particularly valuable services. It was made an auxiliary organization of the Army both at home and at the front. Canteens and hostels for soldiers in training, on leave, or behind the lines, were erected and run by them. Collections taken up for this and similar objects were always sure of generous contributions. Compasses, field-glasses, and other useful articles were gladly given up by their private owners for the use of officers and men at the front. The many-sided and none too easy duties of policing the streets at night, in order to replace young policemen who had been persuaded to exchange their uniform for that of the Army and Navy, were carried out voluntarily by older men, in addition to their business or professional work, and women of every station of life reported themselves as being ready to undertake any work that might be assigned

to them. The people rushed to help wherever they could, but the men did not, in sufficient numbers, join the colours.

The deep underlying causes for this War were as little understood by the people then as they are probably to-day. That which was being proclaimed as the cause for England's entry into the War was accepted : The defence of Belgium and the keeping of its pledged word. It was not yet generally appreciated how much the country itself and the safety of each of its inhabitants, its prestige and its trade, would be drawn into the vortex of events.

As the people's realization of actual danger began to dawn, everything possible was done to reassure them and to maintain their morale. Rumours were skilfully circulated to that end calculated to strengthen resistance. At the end of 1914, for instance, the news went round that 72,000 Russians had been landed secretly somewhere on the coast of Scotland, had been rushed across England and then shipped over to France to relieve the pressure on the sorely tried British forces at the Belgian front. The story was gladly believed and welcomed. Nobody thought of the impossibility of moving a large army with full equipment across a country in much the same way as a box of tin soldiers. For though no one had actually seen these Russian troops, everybody had heard of them ; people had met someone

who had a friend who was supposed to have seen them. But the rumour was there, the popular mind was relieved, and the Government took care not to deny it.

From the first, the fear of Zeppelins lay like a nightmare over the London populace. They were expected, and the apprehension of what they might do was much greater than any damage they actually caused. Their most obvious objective was considered the huge arsenal at Woolwich, near London, and next to that the bridges over the Thames which permitted the quick transport to the ports of embarkation of a great part of England's army. Plans were made at once to make taking their bearings as difficult as possible for the German raiders. The large London parks, which could probably easily be identified as big, black areas, were, therefore, illuminated in a manner calculated to make them look like streets when seen from high above. Later, the lighting of all London was subdued to one uniform standard. I shall never forget the summer evening in 1915 when the first Zeppelin raid on London actually took place. I had worked all through the previous night and had therefore gone to bed early. Half asleep, I became aware of a rattling noise which seemed to last an eternity. I thought the shutters of my window did not close properly and decided that they must be fixed the next day. Suddenly

I was wide awake. Fists were hammering at my door. "Come out quickly ! The Zepps are over London !" The call rang through the house. I was on my feet in a jiffy, tore open the shutters, pushed up the window, and saw just over my head a magnificent spectacle. Dreamlike and majestic, like a silver gondola, the Zeppelin hung there in the air as if held in place by the beams of the searchlights. My countrymen—Home—a piece of Germany—in sight, so near and yet so far ! The noise that I had heard in my sleep had been the popping, crackling reports of anti-aircraft guns placed all round the capital. Suddenly there was a new dull, booming sound. A bomb had fallen somewhere. I found out later that it had dropped in Theobald's Road, near where I had a flat in reserve, and that the force of the explosion had smashed the windows and thrown splinters of glass into the room.

People began to shout at me from the street, and with a jerk I was back in reality. It was strictly forbidden to show lights at night, and in my excitement I had left the light in my room burning when I opened the shutters. If anybody should imagine that I was signalling to the Zeppelin it might lead to complications. Quickly I turned off the light and dashed down into the street. The tenants of the house were all outside, including a recently arrived French artillery officer, who was

on some mission in London and whom I now got to know for the first time. After the Zeppelin had disappeared, he joined me in my room and we talked together, both equally excited for different reasons, over cigarettes and coffee until long into the small hours.

What the young man, who seemed to know his job, told me was very interesting, but nothing new and hardly of great importance. Months before I had sent some information of such precautionary measures against Zeppelin attacks as I had been able to find out. How anti-aircraft guns were fitted with automatic range-finders and so co-ordinated with each other that they would be able to catch and hold the raider in a well-aimed fire almost as soon as sighted. In addition, huge searchlights had been erected at different points in London, especially on the flat roofs of government and municipal buildings, and so coupled with the batteries as to serve at the same time the range and direction-finders for the guns. A movable synchronized network of light and power, which could be altered at will, was to be stretched over the English capital. This was the idea behind the plans.

In view of the insufficient number of recruits obtained by appeals for voluntary enlistment and the steadily increasing casualties at the front, the idea of introducing conscription, which had been

demanding by the War Office from the very outbreak of hostilities, was now beginning to gain ground in Parliament. The question was brought up again and again with increasing support, but still met with a powerful and vehement opposition. The Asquith as well as the Coalition Government were both against it. Officially they claimed that the old tried system of voluntary service would suffice to bring enough young men to the colours to replace the losses in France and Belgium, and to create reserves. In reality, the Government was of opinion that the country was not ready for the introduction of such a measure, which would mean a complete revolution of all the traditions and customs of the people. They had to be prepared for it.

A new law, however—the “National Registration Act”—was passed through Parliament which made it compulsory for every British subject living in England and Scotland to register himself. As proof that he had done so he received a card giving all personal particulars. It had to be carried on one’s person and produced on demand. It was clear that this registration was for the purpose of getting the names and addresses of all men of military age. It was the first step towards conscription.

Since the lists to be filled out for registration were delivered to the owner of each house, who was

held personally responsible for returns from all of his tenants, I had no means of avoiding this awkward registration. The sponsor of this plan was Lord Derby. As soon as it was realized that the number of enlistments fell far behind expectations and had begun to diminish every day, he was placed in charge of recruiting throughout the British Isles in the hope that he would be able to bring new life into the old system.

A fresh and intensive recruiting campaign began, backed by every pressure that could be exercised. A plan was inaugurated according to which men could enlist but remain in their civil employment till called up for service. They were considered as belonging to the Reserves and were given armlets to show that they had followed the country's call and become volunteers.

Even this scheme did not bring the desired results, although everything possible under it was tried. Officers on leave from the front made patriotic appeals in the theatres, music-halls, even on street corners, urging their hearers to join up and help them to end the War. Lord Derby sent a circular letter to all the men of England of military age, and asked them to place themselves at the disposal of the military authorities. Along with this persuasive letter a campaign of personal solicitation was instituted, and young, well instructed men and non-commissioned officers were sent

WAR SPIRIT AND CONSCRIPTION 177

on a house to house canvass to urge each young man to do his duty to his country. They did their work well. Even I found it embarrassing to say



Imperial House,
Kingsway, W.C.
6th November, 1915.

Sir,

With reference to the circular which you have received from Lord Derby, you have my authority to inform any canvasser or recruiting officer that your services are of special value to the Censorship, and that I hope that no effort will be made to persuade you to relinquish your present employment.

Deputy Chief Censor

I.C. Silber Esp.,

No to the clean-cut fine N.C.O who came to visit me, and to tell him that I was certified as indispensable by the censorship.

A certificate to this effect had been issued to a number of men.

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This was the last attempt to avoid the introduction of conscription which was being demanded more and more pressingly by the Conservative Press, although it was still opposed by Asquith's Government, not only because it considered the time not yet ripe for passing such a law, but, perhaps, because it felt ashamed to have to resort to compulsion in a matter it would for ever have been a source of pride to the whole nation to accomplish without force.

In time, however, the staunchest opponents of the movement saw that they could get no further without it. Although propaganda was supremely efficient, it still was not powerful enough to change in a few months the old, deep-rooted ways of a whole people, especially one so tenacious as the British. The idea of every man having to fight for his country was something still strange to the masses. They had been too long accustomed to small wars for which there had been more volunteers than needed. Now conditions were changed.

November 1915 came and went. Winter was almost upon us. The German military position was everywhere favourable. But the nations strained their ears in vain for even the faintest note of peace.

At the beginning of 1916, the Conscription Bill was forced through Parliament. The last day for voluntarily joining the Army was fixed for February 15.

WAR SPIRIT AND CONSCRIPTION 179

The censorship officials received a polite but firm intimation that it was assumed, as a matter of course, all those who were of military age would enlist voluntarily before this date. This was done. We were medically examined and nearly all passed as fit for General Service, and given the armlet, a sign that we now belonged to the Reserves.

My belief that the older men, who were nearly in the forties, would not be taken for a considerable time proved false. The last day for volunteering was hardly past before posters appeared on all street corners that the classes 1-8, i.e. all men up to about the age of thirty-two, were called up. It was clear that with such a rapid start the older men would also have to join up very soon.

The next three months were a transition period, during which the War Office contented itself with calling up the whole of the Voluntary Reserve. This was the last grace.

At the end of May 1916 conscription was definitely established in England. It was an open secret that there would soon be very heavy fighting on the Somme. It was realized that, though it could scarcely be decisive, the losses in the battles would be very severe, and as many men as possible were therefore summoned to replace those that fell.

The tension had increased tremendously in the course of the last few weeks. One became vaguely aware of a strong undercurrent of excitement

beneath the cool and composed bearing which is so characteristic of the inbred self-control of Englishmen.

One event followed hard on the heels of the last. Officers on leave, convalescing in Liverpool, were on the whole very reserved. Yet, none the less, from hints dropped here and there, and little details mentioned in ordinary conversation, one could put two and two together and get a fair idea of what would be shortly expected. In the club a staff-officer, who had just come back from the Army Headquarters in Montreuil, told us that there was no pessimism there as regarded the situation at Verdun, and that it was chiefly for reasons of propaganda so much was being made of it in the papers. Perhaps it might deceive the enemy and cause them to concentrate the greater part of their forces at this point. A young naval officer attached to the staff of the admiral commanding in this district mentioned quite casually, *à propos* of some talk about the German Navy, of certain recent suspicious movements of the German Fleet.

This remark was soon forgotten, like many another, and only returned to memory three days later when the telephone at the censorship office rang and alarming news was reported from London. A great naval battle was in progress. Admiral Beatty had lost three armoured cruisers in the course of the first hour's fighting owing to the

remarkable marksmanship of the German ships. This first report of the Battle of Jutland came like a hammer-blow on the people of England. She was being threatened in her most important vital interest, her command of the sea, and her prestige. The foe was apparently more dangerous than had been imagined.

The deep satisfaction at this news of the splendid success of the German battlefleet was marred by the knowledge of the uncanny accuracy of the British Intelligence Service. Even in Liverpool important movements of the German Fleet were known three days before the battle. This could not be due solely to the use of highly developed technical means, such as, for instance, the interception of wireless messages and the computation of the changing positions of ships through directional wireless, and which had enabled them to know of these movements as soon as they had been arranged or were taking place. There must have been other sources of information available to the British Intelligence Service—information which should never have leaked through.

The Battle of Jutland was still the main topic of conversation and everybody still very depressed over its outcome, when another catastrophe stirred England again. This was the death of Lord Kitchener, who was on his way to Petrograd to get into personal touch with the Russian military

leaders. His departure from England had been kept a careful secret. In spite of this we had heard of it in Liverpool on June 4. Next day our department got the news by telephone that the cruiser *Hampshire* had been sunk, and that Kitchener and the whole of his staff, as well as the whole ship's company, had gone down. Only two or three men were reported saved. A few hours later we heard that Kitchener, too, had been saved and a feeling of relief went through all.

Toward evening, however, this report was contradicted. The wildest rumours were current. The general belief was that a German submarine had been lying in wait to prevent Kitchener's journey to Russia. According to the official reports issued later the *Hampshire* had struck a mine that had torn itself loose from its anchorage during the stormy weather raging at that time, and, drifting, had hit the ship as it passed the Orkney Islands.

The head of the Liverpool censorship had been one of the first to resign his post, in order to take over the command of a training camp for newly formed battalions. He had very kindly offered to take me too, after the necessary course in an O.T.C. He meant it well and I thanked him in the same spirit, though of course I could not explain to him why I never could accept his offer.

As a matter of fact I would gladly have joined

the Army. Once on the Continent I felt I should certainly have found an opportunity to join my compatriots. There were ways that I had considered and that offered reasonable chances of success. But, if I were called up, it would be the end of me, for I had no papers and there was no possibility of obtaining any.

At first I had managed well enough with the testimonials of my activities in South Africa and India and, later on, with my identity card from the Censorship. The national registration card which I had received a year before simply repeated my own statements that I was a Canadian, from the neighbourhood of Quebec. On entering the Army, however, an official birth-certificate was essential. And how could I, born in Silesia in Germany, ever get a birth certificate from Quebec in Canada, where I hardly knew a soul. That was the trap in which I saw myself caught and from which I saw no way out.

Meanwhile, the new head of the censorship recommended my temporary exemption, basing his recommendation on the certificate of indispensability that I had been given the previous year. He certainly did it much against his will, since he naturally felt that every able-bodied man's place was at the front. It was thus only a breathing space that I had gained, and the situation, besides being embarrassing, was dangerous. To the quiet

pressure from above was added the usual self-consciousness which every man felt in those days when he saw people glance at him as if to say "Why aren't you at the front? What are you still doing here?" Then, too, many wounded officers back from the front felt, and very justly so, that having done their bit it was now high time for those who had remained at home to take their places and leave them their safe jobs. Anyone not obviously unfit had little chance of avoiding military service—and I was, as far as I knew, quite fit.

In any case, some ailment was much easier for me to get than a birth certificate. Though I had studied medicine only for a few terms I knew the symptoms of certain complaints. I took the only way open to me out of my difficulty, and for months and months a hard fight was fought out between my increasing symptoms of ill-health and the equally increasing suspicions of the many medical boards before whom I had to appear at regular intervals from then on to the very end of the War. It certainly looked very curious that I should have been passed as fit for General Service at my first medical examination, and now, a few months later, showed all the symptoms of a serious trouble. Again and again I was put back, then classified as fit for garrison duty, and so on. It was solely a matter of luck to have escaped a final decision with its inevitable consequences for me.

My way of life had of course to be altered to suit my condition. I had to give up all physical exercise. It would not do for a man who was suffering from a serious ailment to be seen playing tennis or squash rackets or be met during a brisk cross country walk. I had to be very careful. Once the law of conscription had been passed its provisions were strictly carried out.

Certificates from medical practitioners as to one's physical fitness for service were practically ignored. One had to appear before a military medical board composed of three officers, who examined one thoroughly to decide in which of the three groups the man should be classed: general service, service abroad, or garrison duty at home. Any man not satisfied with the classification of the first board had the right of appeal to another tribunal, whose decision was usually final.

Once I tried to escape all this by flight. To leave England in the ordinary way was impossible. Even for travellers whose papers were in perfect order it was quite a circumstantial business to secure their passports and satisfy the authorities that their journeys were really necessary. A man of military age could leave the country only for very good and sufficient reasons. From correspondence that had gone through the censorship in the late summer of 1916 I had got the name of a neutral ship's captain whose small boat lay at

anchor in X, where it had come with a cargo of timber for the coal mines in Wales. This man was known to the censorship as decidedly pro-German. A lucky chance brought about that, after discharge, this boat was to take a cargo of some sort from Liverpool, so that I could comparatively easily get into touch with the captain. I wasn't quite sure of him as yet, and did not want to place myself at his mercy. I therefore asked him to begin with whether he would be willing to take two Englishmen who wanted to go abroad to avoid military service. The captain raised a lot of objections, which were not easily refutable. He knew as well as I did how very unobtrusively, yet sharply, every neutral ship was watched. Even if a man managed to get on board at night without being seen by the crew, who were hardly to be trusted in such a case, one was by no means safe. Before sailing every ship was thoroughly searched from mast to keel by detectives, and the finding of a stowaway could become a very serious matter for the master of the vessel unless he were known as absolutely above reproach.

After careful consideration I told the captain that it was I who wished to leave England. We arranged a plan that seemed phantastic, but was the only one I could think of which entailed no risk to the skipper. He was to inform me forty-eight hours before the boat was due to sail. We

agreed on a certain point on the chart about eighteen sea miles from the coast, where I was to meet him in a sailing boat. I was to be run down, as it were, and then be picked up as shipwrecked.

I bought a small cutter in Parkgate, a fishing village at the mouth of the Dee, where many well-to-do Liverpool families had their places and others spent the summer months, and made all my preparations for departure in order to leave no compromising clues if I should succeed, and to be able to return to my rooms in case anything went wrong.

Everything went well at the start. I received the message from the captain, took two days' leave, and went to Parkgate in the evening. Shortly before dawn I sailed out with some boats of the village fishing-fleet, left them on reaching open water and laid my course for the place arranged, where I intended to cruise about until I met the ship.

I was hardly well under way when my good luck left me, or so I thought at the time. A fog began to rise and became thicker every minute, swallowing up everything. I had never taken this possibility into consideration, since for weeks the weather had been rather good. Although I had a small compass it was hopeless to try to proceed with my plan. By going about and tacking, I hoped to remain within vicinity of the river mouth,

but soon lost all sense of where I really was. The hours slipped by, and I had difficulty in keeping cool. My sole concern was to get back ashore as quickly as possible. The sea was fairly choppy, and I had no exact idea of how strong the current was nor where it was taking me. At last the fog lifted a little and I found myself not far from the coast opposite the beach at Hoylake, only a little way from the mouth of the Dee, which I had left so full of hope early that morning. I was ill and very depressed and cursed the fog, without which I might perhaps by now have been on the way to some neutral country from where I could easily have reached Germany.

However, one should not bemoan one's bad luck too soon. I drove back to Liverpool in the first taxi I could find. My rooms were as I had left them. Nobody had enquired for me. I had been on leave. In the evening I went to the club. Everything was as it had been. The next morning when I got back to the office I made cautious enquiries about the ship which should have picked me up, and learnt that it had indeed left at the time foretold—but in the direction of the French coast. The captain had evidently received his instructions as to his destination only at the last minute, and the fog had really saved me.

The military medical boards had become very unpopular. The doctors were naturally strict

and classified nearly everyone as fit for general service unless he had some serious defect which could not be overlooked and obviously entitled a man to exemption. They took the view that the chief thing was, first of all, to get every man into the Army, and that then it would still be time enough for treatment of any minor complaints in the military hospitals, or for discharge if men were found who were really not capable of standing the physical strain of military training. Generally speaking, the boards were very fair, and the plan itself quite reasonable. Still, these somewhat rigorous methods aroused the ire of the masses. They were not used to being under military control. They claimed the Army was the armed force of the State, that is to say, of the people, and not its master.

To avoid unnecessary troubles the Government passed a new law, "The National Service Act." By its terms the medical boards were now to consist only of civilian doctors, who had to decide whether a man was fit for service or not. Thus the military authorities no longer had the right to take the men till they had been passed by civilian boards. Few noticed that the doctors were the same as before, the only difference being that they were now officiating in mufti. But the public was satisfied and accepted the decisions of the new boards without any protests. Another example of how well England knows how to manage people.

At first, conscription was confined to England, Scotland and Wales. The authorities did not yet think it wise to try to apply it to Ireland. Feeling over there was dangerously explosive. The leaders of the National Party, supported by the majority of the clergy, refused to let their people be forced to military service under the Union Jack, and the Sinn Feiners, who dreamed of an entirely independent Ireland, felt that their time had come.

Political differences, which had brought Ireland to the verge of civil war just before the beginning of the world conflict, now became again very acute. Through the correspondence of the many Irish settled in the United States the censorship hoped to learn details of any plots or organizations directed against the interests of England and the integrity of the British Empire. The Irish mails between England and Ireland, and not merely to and from overseas, were now also methodically examined.

The hope that the state of affairs in Ireland would be of value to the German cause was one of the many early illusions in Germany. The Irish have hated the English with a deep and bitter hatred for generations. On the other hand, this antagonism did not make them sympathize with or care at all about the German cause. They wanted nothing but their independence, and certainly never had the slightest intention of making any sacrifices in our behalf.

WAR SPIRIT AND CONSCRIPTION 191

Here again the British Intelligence Service showed its matchless superiority. Nothing of any importance happened in Ireland but that the Government was not promptly informed of it. The tension in Ireland grew from day to day, and Irish letters were full of hints, rumours, and sometimes of details about some forthcoming revolution or rising.

England was also extremely well informed of all the steps taken by Sir Roger Casement, that ardent Irishman who was at that time in Germany. In connection with the precise information as to what Casement was doing, and of his plans and movements, which eventually led to his arrest and execution, the name of an Englishwoman was mentioned who, at the outbreak of the War, had accompanied her German husband to Germany. She had no doubt acted under the terrible inner pressure of love for her own country when she saw it so threatened.

On the evening of April 19, 1916—it was the day on which the United States had sent us a diplomatic note about our submarine campaign—an acquaintance of mine had brought a naval officer as his guest to the club. After dinner and the usual rubber of bridge we sat for a while together over our whisky-and-soda. The conversation was animated and lively. We heard that, on the day before, news had come through that Casement was preparing to return to Ireland. He was to be

brought over by a German submarine, and be landed somewhere on the Irish coast from a collapsible boat. The whole coastline was already being watched. We discussed his ideals, and his plan to form a regiment composed of Irish prisoners of war in Germany, to lead them against England. It seemed too childish to be taken seriously. Yet there was no doubt about his exceptional abilities and his selfless love of Ireland. Comparisons between him and the great Czech leader Masaryk were drawn. Casement had not the overwhelming personal ambition of this Czech, being impelled by rather a vague idealism. But we all admitted that he was lost—he had become a traitor to his country. On Good Friday he was caught, arrested and in due course sentenced to death. On Easter Monday revolution broke out all over Ireland.

England as a whole was astounded at the suddenness of this catastrophe. But the Government had been kept well informed, and so were prepared for all emergencies. The rising was quickly suppressed and martial law established all over Ireland. These internal events had, moreover, no effect on the position of affairs on the Continent. Hopes in Germany that England would be compelled to devote a great part of her forces to keep order in Ireland were shown to be entirely illusive. A few reliable regiments were sent over

and a number of training camps were transferred to Ireland so that in case of need quite a sufficient number of troops were available, even if they were not all fully trained.

Not until two years later did England reverse her cautious policy with regard to Ireland and apply conscription even there. It was, however, a failure. Although troops were sent over to enforce the conscriptive measures they did not achieve much.

It was in the summer of 1916 that I first heard of a novel weapon, which later came as a terrible surprise to our forces and one which our enemies still maintain by the thousands in readiness to force our submission in any attempt we might make to shake off our burden of enslavement. In the office a letter was submitted to me written by a woman to her sister in Ireland. She wrote with great relief that at last, after months of uncertainty, she had found out where her husband was, a non-commissioned officer in the Royal Engineers. He had managed to let her know by means of a previously arranged code that he was in a training camp the existence of which had been kept a close secret. He was employed testing "tanks", and there was no chance of his getting any leave at present. The examiner very properly held up the letter, since it clearly disclosed a grave breach of military law, even though the man had

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communicated only with his own wife. Strictly speaking, we should have sent the letter to the military authorities where the man was stationed, so that they could take whatever action they deemed proper. We knew now, of course, the name of the offender. The laws were very stringent in such matters.

I was not interested in having the man punished, for his letter had aroused my curiosity. Why was this building of "tanks" kept so secret? "Tank" simply means a container for liquids. Was this something new connected with gas warfare? One of my acquaintances at the club, a major, was a specialist in this particular branch. I sat down next to him after dinner that evening, and we got to talking over the different methods of using poison gas. He was very amused at my idea of supplying the troops with huge quantities of gas by means of tanks, and he laughed at the notion as absurd. From what he said I saw at once that I was on the wrong track in my surmises.

Inasmuch as I had the name and address of the N.C.O.'s wife, I decided to go to the place where she lived—it was fortunately not very far from Liverpool—and speak to her myself. She lived with her mother and her two children in a very modest cottage, and was distressed when she realized that she had been very indiscreet and really endangered her husband. She answered

my few questions readily : told me the name of the camp in which her husband was serving, and said something about caterpillars. She obviously did not know anything more herself.

This word was at least a slight hint. At the very next opportunity I had I talked at the club with a colonel in the artillery and several other officers about the transport of heavy guns in general, and so gradually came to the conclusion that these tanks must be a sort of armoured car mounted on caterpillar wheels, and armed with guns, which were probably intended to be used in quantities at the front.

At about the same time as this tank episode, there happened one of those personal incidents which always kept one's nerves taut. My first report on the tanks had been completed and sent off to Germany in the usual manner, and I was relieved that everything had gone off so well. Next morning, as soon as I got to the office, I received the order to go at once and report to the Colonel in the main building. This came as a shock, since I suddenly felt that in my eagerness to synthesize out of little scraps of information about caterpillars and transport an idea of what a tank might be, I had probably aroused suspicions. As I turned into the long corridor leading to the Colonel's office I saw a corporal and two men with fixed bayonets posted before his door. "That's

the end," was the thought that flashed through my mind, and stripped me, as it were, of the sense of all corporeal reality. I entered the office, and found it empty. A few moments later the Colonel entered with a copy of some new order that he could just as well have sent to the office with one of the messengers. It then turned out that the escort had lost their way. They had been ordered to proceed to another building across the street to take charge of a deserter who had been caught on board a ship.

A few months later, in the autumn of 1916, a number of tanks were sent to France, and were used for the first time in the fighting round Thiepval.

Naturally, as time went on, the War, even in England, began to make itself economically felt. The tremendous quantities of food and munitions supplied by America had got to be paid for. The pound sterling had dropped. To prevent a serious collapse of the exchange, the British Government saw themselves forced to adopt very radical financial measures at the beginning of 1917. Any real crisis had to be avoided at all costs. The morale of the people would have been gravely shaken. This was clear to the Government, and they staved off the catastrophe in a manner as simple as energetic and successful. The Government demanded of British investors, who had vast sums of money abroad, especially in the United States,

that they should exchange all their foreign gilt-edged securities for War Loan, so that debts to America could be paid. Some people, of course, endeavoured to evade this regulation, and tried to send their holdings abroad as quickly as possible, to sell them, perhaps, at a better price and to keep their funds outside of the United Kingdom.

To prevent this flight of capital, the A.D.S.C., the "American Dollar Securities Committee", was organized in London. Anyone—either bank, broker or private person—wishing to send foreign securities abroad or dispose of holdings already on deposit in a foreign country had to obtain the permission from this committee, and attach the licence for each particular transaction to every letter of instructions or the securities themselves. The control was in the hands of the censorship, which also had to supervise the import of foreign securities. Since such letters were registered, American securities being the most common, nearly all this correspondence came through the hands of the department in Liverpool. This control involved a great increase of work and an enlargement of the staff. Our safe often contained securities representing tens of thousands of pounds. They had to be held pending the arrival of the licences. Although this measure caused slight delays in the transmission of banking correspondence between the two countries, it certainly averted a financial

crisis and undoubtedly saved the credit of the nation.

In the first weeks of spring of this year I spent a short leave at Harrogate, the famous spa on the moors. While I was there the United States declared war on Germany. I remember that evening well. There was great rejoicing in the hotel. Victory seemed already in sight. The event was celebrated and an elderly American couple that chanced to be staying in the hotel were fêted as if they, personally, had been responsible for America's decision.

I was back on duty in the second week in April, and came just in time to see another letter from "Polly", who had evidently just returned from a visit to Paris and who wrote of the outbreak of serious mutinies in the French Army. This was news indeed. I had talked almost daily with officers or men just returned from France on leave, but till then there had never been the slightest hint of trouble in the French Armies. "Polly's" reports were usually reliable. She related in detail how, immediately after the Russian revolution, a number of French regiments had set out from the front for Paris to demand the immediate cessation of hostilities. They were tired of this bloodshed, tired of the War, and wanted peace. A corps of about 15,000 Russians, sent to France just before the revolution in Petrograd, considering itself

badly treated, had joined forces with the mutineers. They had been freshly equipped on arrival and then been used as cannon fodder, placed always in the worst sections of the line. A few weeks later a second letter from "Polly" confirmed her previous statements, describing the ever-increasing disaffection in the French ranks. As the French commander Nivelle had proved himself unequal to the situation, he had, therefore, been replaced by Petain, who had suppressed the affair with Draconic severity. He had understood how to stiffen the morale of the affected troops and prevent a total breakdown, until the arrival of the first American troops revived their courage.

Everywhere new hope was born with America's entry into the War. In England too. But if the people believed that America's participation would mean that conscription would not be enforced as strictly as hitherto they found themselves much mistaken. The first American warships had, it is true, reached British waters in May, and had been given Scapa Flow as their base, but this was really nothing more than an encouraging gesture. The War Office knew that it would be months before America, which did not have a standing army of any size, would be in a position to throw any considerable forces into the field. England could not wait so long. The extended front, which was getting longer and longer as months slipped

past, was in urgent need of immediate reinforcements. There were naturally a good many men in England, as no doubt everywhere else, who tried to evade military duty by hiding. This especially in the larger cities. As in other towns, so also in Liverpool, veritable raids were made from time to time in parks, or other places where many men were seen, to catch all those who had no national registration card bearing the notation of the recruiting offices. The censorship also received instructions to look out in any private letters for remarks which might show that a member of the family was trying to avoid being called up. In this manner the authorities managed to trace the whereabouts of a large number of men.

About the beginning of May 1917 the rationing of food was introduced. It did not come unexpected, for the Government had prepared the public for this contingency so that it should not come as an unpleasant shock. In reality, there was probably no absolute economic need for such a measure, and it was taken perhaps mainly for reasons of diplomacy, and as a sort of propaganda. The Government thought it wise to show, especially to the somewhat envious and mistrustful French ally, that England, too, was suffering from the shortage of supplies, and that the people did not live in abundance, as the French believed. Meat, butter, sugar, and fuel were rationed. The

restrictions could not, however, be compared with those in force in Germany, which had to live on rations so small that people would not have believed it possible. The masses in England would never have endured for so long the misery that the German civilian population bore so patiently.

On the 7th of May the first aeroplane raid took place over London and was followed by others all through the winter. The effect was indescribable. The Zeppelins had never caused such a panic. In all the letters that came through the censorship at that time there was an undercurrent of horror and fear of these raids. On all sides the question was asked how long London could resist such attacks if made regularly by powerful squadrons. The British Government, however, knew well that Germany did not possess enough aeroplanes and could not build sufficient new ones for want of material to threaten the capital seriously.

Germany was running short of every essential raw material. She tried to replace them with yet greater efforts. Its defenders went from attack to attack, held their own positions with stubbornness, and so carried on from spring to summer and from autumn to winter. The battles still raged in France and Flanders, but would soon have to subside into a stagnancy, and defer a decision, since cold and ice were at the door. In the East, the War with Russia and Rumania was drawing to its close. Yet

it still went on, and with every day Germany's stores and equipment dwindled and her weapons deteriorated. On the other hand, time was on England's side. The longer the War lasted the more certain she was of victory. It could create huge reserves of supplies. There was no need to economize on their quality. There was no lack of equipment, guns, munitions. This gave our enemies a tremendous advantage, of which they were well aware, and one against which all the bravery of our troops and the brilliant leadership of Hindenburg and Ludendorff were in vain.

Yet in no other period of the War did the mood of the public in England vary so often as in these few months. The long-hoped-for entry of America on the side of the Entente had given the popular expectation of a speedy end of the War a tremendous stimulus, but the events of 1917 seemed to darken their hopes again. The German air raids disquietened the civilian population, conscription threatened to take the last of the youth of the country, and the thought of being called up just before War ended increased the nervous tension. In addition, there was the ever-changing military situation.

The defeat of the Italians at Caporetto in October 1917 had had a very depressing effect on the Allies. The authorities would have liked to send two or three divisions to the Piave to en-

courage and help the Italians, and save them from a total collapse. This was, however, impossible, since at that time the battle of Passchendaele was being fought in Flanders, and no troops could be spared. There were troops in training in England, but it would be some time before they could be employed at the front. Perhaps a brigade could be spared, and its commander had already been chosen and was daily awaiting orders. Meanwhile, England saved the situation with a magnificent bit of tactics. Two or three battalions, with their regimental bands, were sent to Italy. They had to march through the villages and towns behind the front on the right bank of the Piave, where the beaten Italian forces were feverishly trying to reform. With bands playing they created the impression of strong British reinforcements having already arrived in Italy. A young non-commissioned officer who had taken part in this affair gave me a very vivid account of its extraordinary reviving effect on the defeated Italian troops and discouraged civilian population. The few British soldiers restored the confidence of the inhabitants and the danger of a grave catastrophe was averted. But his own men, after four weeks of marching and counter-marching, grew heartily sick of it and were anxious to get back to the front.

The failure of the battle of Passchendaele, too,

had been very discouraging to the Allies. Nearly a quarter of the whole British Army had been put out of action. The immediate result was a heightening of recruiting activities. America was sending small drafts of well-equipped men, but one could not count on strong reinforcements before the spring of the following year. It was easy to see from the correspondence that came through the censorship on what a vast scale were the preparations in America to land in Europe large contingents of men, air squadrons, and the most modern war material to assist at the final attacks, soon to be delivered against the mortally wounded Germany.

After the heavy losses on the battlefields of the Western Front, the hospitals were filled with wounded, and the women of England cared for them with the greatest possible kindness and sympathy, either individually or in small well-ordered organizations. Especial kindness was shown to those who had come from the Colonies, or whose mother-tongue was not English, and who, cut off as they were from intercourse with the rest, must have felt their lot particularly hard. As far as was possible, they tried to get hold of people who came from those parts or who could understand the language and customs of these men from Overseas. Owing to the fact that I was known as a French-Canadian, I was naturally asked one day to visit

some wounded French-Canadians who did not understand a word of English, but only spoke the patois of the province of Quebec. A refusal on my part was of course impossible, and yet I did not like the idea. I knew something about the conditions, customs, history and literature of Quebec, so as to be able to talk about it, if necessary, and had also learnt a few French-Canadian rhymes that render so delightfully the spirit of the habitant :

A la clair fontaine
 M'en allant promener
 J'ai trouvé l'eau si belle
 Que je m'y suis baigné
 I'y' a long temps que je t'aime
 Jamais je ne t'oublierai.

or :

Derrier chez nous'y a-t-un étang—
 En roulant ma boule—
 Trois beaux canards s'en vont baignant—
 En roulant ma boule—
 Rouli, roulant, ma boule roulant,
 En roulant ma boule roulant
 En roulant ma boule.

But I felt that I should seem rather unconvincing to any real French-Canadians, particularly if they should be well informed men. Certainly I would not dare to venture on any long conversations. I loaded myself up as much as possible with small gifts, such as were usually taken to the wounded, and otherwise I was a very taciturn visitor. These hospital visits became a weekly duty. The fine

upstanding fellows, most of them half-breeds, were overjoyed if one brought them something to smoke or some small luxuries, and seemed quite satisfied with a few cheery, encouraging words. It was more difficult when a wounded officer, with all the obstinacy of a patient who is terribly bored, insisted that I should at least have tea with him. He was some distant relation of Boroussa, the leader of the National Party in Quebec, and politics were his hobby. We chatted pleasantly, but I was very glad when a nurse came to end my visit on that day.

One little episode in connection with the French-Canadians seemed at first to be quite a mysterious and interesting matter, until it later turned out to be perfectly harmless. At Christmas time, which always brought a flood of correspondence, a letter was shown me that had aroused the suspicions of the examiner. The absolutely illegible signs were of a primitive sort such as any schoolboy might have used as a code. The letter was sent to London to be deciphered, where they found out that it was not a code at all but the ordinary writing of the Cree Indians, invented by and taught to the tribe by a missionary some sixty years previously. It did contain a great deal of military information which had to be deleted, although it was really of no importance. As there were a number of Cree and Chénook Indians in a Canadian division around Ypres it might be

expected that more letters would arrive from them. I therefore tried to get hold of a grammar and dictionary of these languages. There was, however, none to be found in a hurry, and so I had to ask an acquaintance to go to the British Museum to copy out the most important rules and a selection of the most usual from the vocabularies and grammars surely to be found there. I discovered later that my deciphering of these letters was a waste of time and trouble. What these Crees and Chénooks wrote to their relations at home was sometimes not exactly permissible and had therefore to be deleted, but it was never of any importance or value.

Christmas 1917 arrived. After the holidays the work coming through the censorship diminished, again to assume its normal volume. For Christmas dinner I was invited to the house of General X and went there, although, of course, I ought not to have accepted his kind hospitality. But he was a man of so fine a mind and character that I could not resist the temptation. The dull weight of the War was on us all. We drank a silent toast and thought of the son of the house who was at the front.

January of the fateful year 1918 brought as chief event the famous Fourteen Points of President Wilson, the eighth of which hit Germany particularly severely since it involved the giving up of Alsace-Lorraine. Only a few months previously, after the

failure of the Franco-British offensive and the downfall of Russia, when voices for peace were making themselves heard in England and France, and Pope Benedict's message to the belligerent nations was finding an echo in the hearts of all, Herr von Kuehlmann had answered the question in the Reichstag whether Germany was prepared to make concessions in the matter of Alsace and Lorraine with an emphatic "Never !" He had at the same time completely ignored England's and America's insistence upon relinquishing any claims to parts of Belgium as a *conditio sine qua non* preliminary to any negotiations. Now Wilson ignored von Kuehlmann's "Never", and equipped army corps after army corps to tear also the Belgium trump card out of our hands.

I now heard much that depressed me. In the first few days of March, I met at the house of my chief a Colonel X., who belonged to the general staff. The peace of Brest-Litovsk had already been signed, the German spring offensive was about to commence, and the Colonel was explaining to us the present position. He was of opinion that the Central Powers would have done better to have been satisfied with an armistice for the time being, instead of imposing such severe conditions of peace on Russia and forming these new buffer states which would be bound to carry the seeds of future conflicts. By this political blunder, Germany had

given her enemies a means to re-kindle the will to fight to a finish in the Entente countries. He was right. The whole Press at once took up the Russian peace, to show that Germany was only out for conquest.

Then the Colonel explained that the great German offensive about to take place, and of which England seemed to know almost as much as the German General Staff, was one upon which Germany put all her hopes and expectations. It would be the most bitter fight of the whole War. The Germans would be trying to drive in a wedge between the French and British Armies. The Allies must expect very heavy losses, but those of the Germans would be irreplaceable.

"If they lose, they lose, and it'll be the end ; and if they win they'll lose all the same," he said.

In this time of tension, so charged with excitement, a confidential memorandum by Prince Lichnowski, who had been the German Ambassador in London in 1914, was published. It asserted that the German policy in the summer of 1914 was to blame for the whole catastrophe. The unhappy document naturally poured fuel on the fires of our enemies ; it seemed almost as if Lichnowski or his friends had intended to add to the hardships and difficulties of our half-starving populace.

The early spring brought me three weeks'

leave on a small farm in the West Riding, on the edge of the moors. The first ericas were out and the heather was beginning to show colour. Peewits were everywhere, and the gulls were coming in from the sea to their secluded nesting-places.

The cool breezes from the coast which blew over the moors steeled the nerves and went to the head like champagne.

Just before starting on my leave I had had again to appear before a medical board, which I now attended about every eight or ten weeks. My chances were not very good. The symptoms of my ailment did not appear so serious as formerly. Since the need of men had become greater the standard of requirement as to physical fitness had correspondingly been lowered, and fewer men were put back by the medical tribunals. They were right in a way. It was really absurd to exempt men from some kind or other of military service because their health might suffer thereby. After all, war involves danger to life and limb. In any case, I was told to report again in two months' time, and I felt that I should not be able to escape again.

In my lonely walks on the moors I made all sorts of wild plans which really, in view of the difficulties and the unusual circumstances connected with my activities, did not seem so ridiculous at the time as they do now. I thought of finding some

secluded spot and of laying in a stock of provisions in secret and later coming there to live until the end of the War. I revolved the matter in my mind in all its details, but gave up the plan in the end as quite impracticable. It was better to wait and see what time would bring, and then to try to find a way out.

The greatest battle of the War was raging on the Western Front. The German attack had been of tremendous force. Reports about it kept the tension at a high pitch. They gave details of great German successes—but also of huge German losses. Nobody thought that the War was near its end. On the contrary, in England they were working feverishly on preparations to fight on into 1919 and were expecting that this German drive would penetrate still further before it would spend itself, and come to a standstill.

A letter from the wife of a staff officer in London, who obviously was in close touch with some member of the Cabinet, came through the censorship. She spoke of how busily the General Staff were working on their preparations for the campaign of 1919, especially to improve and perfect the mechanical and chemical warfare so that there might be hope of overwhelming Germany in that year and ending the War. St. Omer was to be the headquarters of the section for chemical warfare. From other letters of people

in London whom one could consider well informed one gathered the general impression that 1919 would be the decisive year. A large expedition was being prepared to go to Archangel. It was to secure the safety and return to England of the huge stores of munitions and supplies that were still there, and which had been shipped for the use of the erstwhile Russian Allies. England did not want them to fall into the hands of the Bolsheviks. Besides, she needed them herself. The first troop transport left in the beginning of August. At about the same time a representative of the American Ford works, who was in London, wrote of an order that had been received by his firm for no less than twenty thousand armoured cars, on which work was to be begun forthwith, so that they could be used for the Allied offensive in the spring of 1919 and ensure its success. A letter from "Polly" told of a conference in Abbeville between the two Allied commanders, Haig and Foch, and the representative of the British Cabinet, Lord Milner, at which the British Commander-in-Chief had energetically demanded France's substantial support for his divisions, which had borne the brunt of our attacks and had suffered great losses through our offensive.

Again, the correspondence of a civil engineer showed what was going on behind the scenes in France. He described the preparations that were

being made to close up the large munition and aeroplane factories near Paris in order to remove them quickly to the South of France if the danger should increase and the capital be no longer safe. Loucheur and Sir William Weir, with their staffs, had already arranged all the details of a quick shift and were merely awaiting the word to carry them out.

It was the last success of my countrymen. The people in England were certainly in a mood of depression at this time. They saw how the weakened and dying enemy had suddenly gathered up his strength and had attacked with all his old might. And although they did not doubt for a moment but that the final victory would be theirs, they were afraid of this enemy in its desperation. But they had the numbers on their side. Their armies grew and grew. America was there. Since declaring war she had already sent three-quarters of a million men to France ; every month another quarter of a million was arriving. In the club there was a constant flow of American officers arriving and, after a day or two, going away. From the windows of the censorship office one saw fresh troops landing every day and marching to their camp near Liverpool, where they were allowed a few days' rest before proceeding to France. The people always greeted them with cheers, for they saw in every American soldier landed in England,

whether he was a lean sinewy Texan or a negro from Louisiana, a welcome ally.

The Americans had their own provisions, which had been sent ahead of them months previously. Their rations were good and plentiful. Since I shared a flat with one American officer who had something to do with the American censorship, I could obtain through him some little extras in the way of butter and sugar, which were severely rationed in England.

In the middle of June 1918 a new medical board placed me in Class II, and I had now to prepare myself for the inevitable end of my activities. My superiors, who thought it a waste of good material to take an experienced censorship official for duties for which he was physically unfit, tried to, and succeeded, in postponing my being called up for another two months in order to have me examined by yet another medical tribunal. A number of other influential men went to a great deal of trouble on my account, not knowing the real state of affairs, and tried to obtain me a post behind the lines. An artillery colonel in charge of the transport of high explosives offered to take me over to his department. A C.O. in the Royal Air Force suggested that I should join his service. They needed a recruiting officer to go to Canada. It was often not easy to refuse the offers of these men, that were so well meant both in the interests

of the country as well as mine. They could not know, of course, that their offers of assistance were merely taking me from Scylla to Charybdis, since any summons to military service meant that my true nationality would inevitably become known.

The unexpected end of the War saved me. The last medical examination which had been fixed for November 19 was adjourned *sine die* on the 12th and never took place.

“U-BOATS” AND “Q-BOATS”

As a relatively new arm the submarine had never yet been used as a medium of attack or defence in naval warfare and of proving its value as such. It was still an entirely incalculable factor. In England they were of opinion that it was still rather an uncertain weapon, something not yet perfected and not possessed by any nation in sufficient numbers. On the other hand, its possibilities were not underestimated after the torpedoing of the three British cruisers in the first few weeks of the War.

At the beginning of the year 1915 I saw for the first time how England regarded the real danger of German submarines. My neighbour at the table in the London censorship had got hold of some fairly extensive correspondence. He gave me some of the letters to read. They were obviously intended for a very small group of persons, and their writer certainly had not expected them to be examined by the Censor. The means were described by which the troop and munition transport between England and France could best be protected, and details were given of some of the methods at present employed to secure vessels

against attack from submarines, together with some suggestions for still better defensive measures. The various traps that had been laid in the Channel were referred to. There were nets of strong steel wire and manilla rope suspended between buoys, and so placed across the Channel in intervals that only a ship with a British pilot on board could negotiate the passages. These nets were shifted every now and again. If a U-boat got into the net she would certainly tear it, but the wire or rope would get tangled up with the screws and stop her. Control defence boats would then be able to see, by the drifting buoys, that a U-boat had got caught and could proceed to destroy it.

A branch of the censorship was to be opened at Folkestone at that time to deal with the correspondence between Belgium and Holland, and I asked for a transfer to this office, hoping that I should thus have a better chance of finding out all the details of these traps and other measures taken, for the destruction of the U-boats. Unfortunately I made the mistake of applying directly to Colonel X, instead of through my immediate superior. As this was a breach of regulations, my application was turned down.

At about the same period I heard from a reliable source of a matter which did not affect the U-boat campaign at the time, but which later was of the very greatest importance in this

connection. It was the aftermath of some naval engagement in the Baltic off the east coast of Russia, in which one of our gunboats was sunk. The tide had washed up the body of an officer, and the code book had been found on him. It had been handed over to the Admiralty at Petrograd, where the importance of the find was at once realized and the British Admiralty informed, through the Russian Naval Attaché at the Embassy in London, Wolnikoff. Winston Churchill, then First Lord, thought it too risky to have the code book sent by an ordinary courier, because the route via Sweden and Finland was long and uncertain. The direct sea route through the Baltic was also closed and unavailable. A torpedo-boat destroyer was therefore sent to Archangel to fetch the code book and bring it back to England as speedily as possible.

When I heard of all this the boat was already on its way back with its valuable burden. If our Admiralty did not hear of this fatal find and continued to use the same compromised code in future the enemy would have the key to all secret instructions and orders transmitted to and within the German Fleet. To judge from the zeal and energy of the British authorities to get this book into their hands one could assume that they considered it of the very greatest importance.

Once again I found myself in possession of

valuable information but cut off by a wall of obstacles from sending it quickly to Germany, and was forced at last, after exploring all sorts of ways and means, to resort to the old method of transmitting my message through the censorship. It involved losing precious days, not to speak of the uncertainty of whether the news would ever get through, since I only rarely managed to find out if my reports had reached their destination.

Months later, in October of the same year, I heard that German naval code books were systematically searched for. A naval officer whom I met occasionally told me that a diver had been sent down to a German U-boat that had been sunk off the Scottish coast to search the cabin of its commander for the code book and other papers. The success had been so great that provisions were made for divers to examine in the future every U-boat sunk, if its position would allow it, not only to obtain confidential documents, but also to look out for technical improvements.

In the meanwhile the submarine warfare had proceeded, had been restricted, made more severe again, and then again been moderated. It was clear to Britain that there was no determined leader at the head of the naval forces in Germany, and no well-considered, clear, cut policy to carry out. The only man who, given a free hand, might have been able to achieve something and

become perhaps a naval Hindenburg, Admiral Tirpitz, was in disfavour.

On May 7, 1915, the *Lusitania* was sunk off the Irish coast. Many protests, diplomatic notes, and explanations have been exchanged and much has been written on the subject. In any case this British liner entered the declared danger zone under circumstances which led the German U-boat commander to assume that we had a right to attack the ship. It was most unfortunate that lives were lost. The German Ambassador in Washington had issued a general warning to all passengers before the boat sailed against travel in the declared war zones. The warning was disregarded, but later used to accuse him of having been privy to a plan to sink this particular vessel. The diplomatic shilly-shally with which the case was handled made it appear that it was an unparalleled premeditated crime, and gave the enemy all the trump cards for its propaganda against the barbarians. The sinking of this ship caused us irreparable losses in prestige. It aroused a storm of rage which seemed the more justified the more we tried to assuage it. All over England and in most of the Colonies shops found bearing German names were mobbed, looted, and smashed up.

Ineffective as a whole, but in individual exploits distinguished by many deeds of the

greatest daring, the U-boat war continued through the months. The propaganda used it as a means of preparing the people for the future rationing of food. The shares of the shipping companies rose to unprecedented heights, and freight rates soared except where the Admiralty fixed them. Beyond this the U-boat war did not exert in the faintest degree the pressure on the economic life of Britain that we had hoped for. Nevertheless, the submarines were an acute and constant danger, and a stimulus to the inventive genius to devise defensive measures against them.

The British Admiralty was flooded with suggestions as to how best to combat the U-boats. Some also came from America. Nearly every mail brought letters in which inventors and other imaginative persons submitted ideas and plans to the Admiralty. Most of them were valueless at first glance ; a few appeared so grotesque that one did not know whether to take them seriously or not. But even of these at least two were tried out.

One suggestion came from Mr. Pearson, the head of the Audubon Society in New York, whose founder had been a famous ornithologist. Pearson suggested that British submarines should regularly cruise about certain coastal areas for a time and drop food overboard. In this way the gulls would be attracted and accustomed to be on the look-out for such small boats and follow any they saw.

It would not be long before flights of gulls at any given point would betray the presence of German submarines.

The second suggestion, which also had to deal with animals, came from a zoologist. He advised the Admiralty to use trained sea-lions to follow the U-boats. This method is said to have been successfully employed in some cases.

The daring trip of our new merchant submarine, the *Deutschland*, which succeeded in crossing the Atlantic unmolested and reaching America in the summer of 1916, aroused the admiration even of our enemies. But the value of this feat lay solely in facilitating the unhindered communication between the Embassy in Washington and our Government. As a merchant vessel the *Deutschland* could only be considered useful as a means of transporting goods of limited volume, such as valuable chemicals. This feat, however, did not in any way alter the fact that the Allies were now drawing the network of their blockade tighter and tighter around Germany to starve her into submitting to a peace which their armies alone could not have forced on us.

In 1916 the torpedoing of the steamer *Sussex* off the mouth of the Seine gave rise to the same complications as the sinking of the *Lusitania*. In this case also, American citizens lost their lives, and the United States Government demanded

that the commander of the submarine be punished and further attacks on passenger boats be abandoned. The exchange of diplomatic notes lasted from March to May. In the end the German Government gave in.

In England the ever-increasing tension between Germany and America was watched with grim satisfaction. For this was a critical time for the Central Powers, who had their hands full without these additional difficulties. Many vital decisions hung by a hair at this juncture. The Italian declaration of war against Germany was scarcely noticed in the excitement over the sinking of the *Sussex*. On the other hand, the appointment of Hindenburg and Ludendorff to the supreme command of our forces made a deep impression upon the general public in England. This was clearly reflected in the correspondence which passed through the censorship. The weight of these names eclipsed every other sensation at the moment.

In September 1916 the surprising and momentous news reached England that the German General Headquarters at Pless had decided to resume U-boat warfare, and this time carry it through without restrictions. The actual formal declaration of this measure was to be delayed only so long as was necessary to secure the borders of Denmark and Holland in case they should be compelled by the Allies to declare war on Germany.

In view of the events in the spring, but a few months ago, and of the German submission at that time, this news was staggering. But it came from an absolutely reliable source. I got the impression that it was based on a report of some neutral Embassy or Legation in Berlin to its own Government, and that some unauthorized person had managed secretly to secure a copy.

When, a few months later, on February 1, 1917, the formal declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare was actually issued, its chances of succeeding were everywhere discussed at great length. People felt that it was a last desperate throw by a gambler who had nothing to lose and was staking all on this one hazard.

England knew that we possessed only a limited number of U-boats. They were thought to be about one hundred and thirty. Their real value would certainly not be so great as might have been in the first months of War, since the enemy was now prepared and knew how to meet the danger in many ways. This weapon had also lost prestige ever since it became obvious that Germany had not dared to make full use of it. England had found repeatedly that Germany gave way before any threatening attitude of America. At any rate, the U-boat danger was no longer overestimated in England. An officer on Admiral S.'s staff, who knew all about it, said that England would

certainly have to count with very heavy losses at first, since some time must elapse before counter-measures were perfected and applied. Ships already at sea would naturally suffer most ; but the difficult time would soon be over.

It was incomprehensible to all well-informed persons in England how the responsible men in Germany could imagine that an intensive U-boat campaign at this stage of the War could alter its ultimate outcome. Did Germany really believe it could oppose and more than counterbalance with these mechanical means the tremendous spiritual power that America would pour into her warlike efforts now that her prestige, too, had been challenged? For there was little doubt that the declaration of unrestricted U-boat warfare would bring America to the side of the Allies, and this actually happened soon afterwards.

As had been expected, the German submarine campaign was at first a great success, and the uneasiness in Britain increased in spite of all the efforts made by the Government to counteract it by disguising the actual figures of the tonnage sunk.

England naturally employed every possible method to combat the danger. The censorship received very strict instructions to delete all mention of the names of outgoing ships, their destination, the nature of their cargo. Germany

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should have no opportunity to find out anything about the movement of merchant vessels. On the same grounds, news of the destruction of any U-boat was carefully withheld, so that Germany should be left in uncertainty as to their fate as long as possible.

A well-known English artist had conceived the idea of painting the sides of the ships so as to produce optical illusions, which would make it very difficult for an observer at a distance to determine their size, identity, and, under certain circumstances, even the direction in which they were going. This camouflaging was universally adopted. In a department of the Admiralty fresh designs were constantly being made and tested, and then placed at the disposal of the shipping companies for their boats.

The hitherto unrestricted issue of *Lloyd's Register* to all those interested was stopped so that no copy should get into German hands. It could be issued only to those who were now dependent on it for their business, and then only against a receipt. Lloyd's had been the business nerve-centre of the whole world's shipping for more than two hundred years, the place where all information about ships was gathered for redistribution, and all important insurance was effected. Anyone who wanted to know anything about a ship, no matter of what flag, could be certain of obtaining

all details at Lloyd's, not only as regards size, value, seaworthiness, construction, age, but also of the daily movements of vessels all over the world, their departures, destinations, and their cargoes. Lloyd's knew everything and published it regularly in daily and weekly bulletins.

The Liverpool censorship was of course one of the offices provided with a copy of *Lloyd's Register*. It was very bulky and contained the current data of every vessel, except the small coasting steamers, sailing the seven seas. In addition, asterisks marked the name and owners of every ship sunk by a German submarine or mine. The British losses were heavy, it is true, but they stood in no relation to the tremendous amount of new tonnage that England was able to put in commission to replace them. I succeeded in obtaining an extra copy, and sent it off. Later I heard that it actually reached Germany. Its contents were, of course, somewhat out of date before the list came into the hands of the German Admiralty, but experts might probably derive some useful information from it. I heard by chance, later, that the U-boat section in Kiel had been hoping to get a copy, in order to have it reproduced and distributed to all the U-boat commanders.

British waters were constantly patrolled. It often happened that the Mersey was closed for hours to every sort of shipping because a German

submarine had been reported in the vicinity. Along the coasts air patrols kept a look-out for the presence of underwater craft, which could be ascertained from a certain height. British vessels were equipped with an apparatus, the audiphone, a sort of microphone which was suspended under water below the keel of the ship, and caught not only the sound of ship's screws but registered also the direction from which they came.

One Sunday in September, when I was in London, the discussion at tea turned on the successes of the raider *Wolff*, which had destroyed so much Allied shipping and which hitherto had managed to escape capture. It was the anniversary of Sedan, and I followed the conversation with a secret thrill. Our country was still producing men whose bravery even the enemy admitted without stint. But the next topic touched cooled my secret satisfaction. It referred to the fatal indiscretion of the German Ambassador in Buenos Aires, Count Luxburg. With the help of his Swedish colleague, who was probably not aware of its contents, he had succeeded in getting a cable through to Berlin. He stated that a vessel carrying grain was on her way to Europe from the Argentine, and suggested that it should be "sunk without trace" in order to stop the export of grain to England and France from South America. It was a puzzle to all how these two diplomats could

have imagined that such a message could have passed unchallenged through the British net. It was, of course, intercepted and decoded, and the results were as might have been expected. The Argentine Government handed our Ambassador his passports as soon as they were informed of the matter, and the expression "spurlos versenkt" was used from then onwards as a further example of the barbarian methods of war of the Germans.

Throughout the whole of the winter months of 1917-1918 I was vaguely aware that some important action was planned against the southern shores of the Channel, but where I could not determine. Again and again I lost the threads, and all my attempts to find out something definite were in vain. Nobody knew anything ; and yet there was something going on. Already, in September, an acquaintance at the club, who had a great deal to do with the supply of artillery ammunition, had hinted that some big action was in preparation and would take place in the course of the next few months. He had at one time been stationed opposite Passchendaele, and I deduced from what I could gather that a great attack was probably being planned through Holland from the English south coast as a base of action. In November and December everything I heard seemed to show that I was right in my conjecture, and only the fact that nothing about it came

through the censorship still puzzled me. A plan of such magnitude could hardly be prepared without some news leaking out.

In the second week in January a letter was shown me which again aroused my curiosity. The writer, who like many other people imagined that letters to Canada were not censored because it was a British dominion, openly told his brother that he was taking some special training in Dover for a great "show" (as special military undertakings were sometimes called) due to take place very shortly. The idea of an attack through Holland had taken such a firm root in my mind that I at once considered this a confirmation of my assumptions. The very next Saturday I went down to the little town of Folkestone, which lies near Dover, in the hope of learning some particulars. But nobody seemed to have the faintest inkling that anything unusual was taking place in Dover or anywhere near, so I came to the conclusion that the "show" referred to was nothing more than one of those which the squadron of Admiral Sir Roger Keys carried out from time to time. It was the Admiral's function to protect the Channel against U-boats and keep it clear for the troop- and ammunition-transports on their way to and from France.

The next Monday morning General X sent for me and ordered that all correspondence from the

neighbourhood of Dover was to be examined with particular care. Every letter containing the merest hint at any military measures was to be sent at once to the head office in London.

So there *was* something afoot! The longer this secret was undisclosed the more it stimulated curiosity. The new instructions were immediately put in force and I knew that any suspicious letter would be brought to me. For a time no information at all came through. Either the writers of letters in that district knew nothing, a strict warning had been issued, or else they were very discreet. Gradually, however, little bits of news began to form themselves into a vague picture, which permitted deductions to be made that no raid on Holland was intended, but one to destroy the German submarines' base in Zeebrugge. Picked men, specially trained for the enterprise, were to be rushed on land from transports, attack at once, destroy the base, and return as quickly as possible to their ships. At the same time one of the older armoured cruisers was to be sunk at a suitable point to block the harbour and imprison the U-boats within. It so happened that one day at this period a few bags of mail to a neutral European country were being censored in our department. It was therefore possible to send the news to Germany. But it probably never reached its destination. In the middle of April the attack

was carried out and succeeded. The Mole was destroyed, and the German submarines were bottled up in the harbour.

The strangest, most ingenious and dangerous counter-measure used by the British in their fight against the U-boats became known to me through the all-provident censorship. The existence and uses of the Q-boats were secrets jealously guarded for a long time, since their strength lay in the manner of their employment being known only to those immediately concerned.

A young girl wrote a very happy letter to her sister in Canada that their brother had been decorated for bravery and was on leave at home, since his ship was in harbour quite close by. He was now serving on a special kind of ship, the first of its kind, and which would soon put an end to all the German U-boats. The examiner held up the letter, first because it gave the name of the harbour where the ship was lying, which it was forbidden to mention ; and secondly, because of the hints contained in it, which suggested that the young seaman had been guilty of a serious indiscretion, even if what he had said he had told only to members of his family thoughtlessly and in justifiable pride.

I was about to delete the passage in question when I thought better of it and caused the letter to be returned to the girl, with the official warning

slip against the mention of military or naval matters. Then I made a note of the name and address. The next free day I had I went down to the little seaboard town where the writer lived.

Without a great deal of luck I should not have got very far in this venture. Even the journey itself was risky, since harbour towns which were used for purposes of war and their surroundings were considered to be military zones. All residents were provided with passes, while strangers who wished to enter the zones had to get special permits for every visit from the competent military or naval authorities.

The conditions for the issue of such permits were laid down in paragraph twenty-nine of the D.O.R.A. I could certainly produce my identity card showing me to belong to the censorship, but it was doubtful whether the railway or military police entrusted with the examination of permits would accept it. If they did not, and the local authorities telephoned to Liverpool to inquire whether I were travelling on duty or not, it would be my end. But, as I have said, I had every luck. The train to the north left late in the evening and was full of sailors and naval officers returning from leave to join their ships. I was the only civilian in my compartment. Talk revolved around shooting in India, in which I could partake, for I knew a little of India and had myself enjoyed

the sport in a modest way. It was very cold when we reached our destination, and an icy wind swept the station platform, so that all were in a great hurry. At the barrier a sergeant of military police asked for the passes of the arriving civilians. I showed my censorship card and the sergeant, seeing me with naval officers, let me pass without a question. A little later in the day I began my investigations, which were crowned with some success. I went to the house from which the letter had come, saw the writer and repeated the official warning. By evening I had learned so much about the secret ship that I was able to make myself a fairly clear picture of its function and manner of operation. With the help of my glasses I could even see it riding at anchor not very far out. It did not differ in appearance from any one of the other dirty little tramp steamers.

During the following weeks I took several other trips to try to get further details. They led me to many ports on the East and West coasts of England and Scotland. Fortunately, these ports were not all in military areas, and in one or two cases luck again favoured me. Most of the journeys yielded nothing at all. Railway connections from Liverpool or Manchester were not always suitable, for the time factor played a most important part, and I often had to go by car to some out-of-the-way station a great distance away in

order to catch my train. The rationing of petrol added to the difficulties. Sometimes it was impossible to get enough. It took two months before more or less adequate information about these mystery ships could be gathered.

As though in response to the urgent need for a reliable means of transmitting the collected data, there came through the censorship a letter from a Swedish mate of a ship lying in an adjacent harbour. It disclosed him as being pro-German in his sympathies, an impression which was confirmed on getting into touch with him. He was then entrusted with a small envelope containing a report about the Q-boats for further transmission. A photographic duplicate went to Holland when the next opportunity offered itself, and I heard later that it had arrived safely.

The idea at the back of the Q-boats was as follows: With their deck cargoes they looked exactly like those slow old tubs that regularly brought pit-props from Norway and Sweden for the coal-mines of Wales. But the interior of these ships was not as harmless. A gun of sufficiently high calibre was mounted on a hydraulic platform which could be raised in a very few minutes. Officers and crew, who wore civilian clothes, belonged to the Royal Navy.

The Q-ship had the task of cruising in the North Sea on routes such vessels would be likely

to use and which were also the hunting-grounds of our U-boats. If a U-boat sighted one of these ships, which always flew a neutral flag, and whose real character could not be determined even with the aid of the most powerful glasses, it was probable that the German commander would order it to stop and have the crew abandon ship. That part of the crew especially detailed for this purpose was to obey this order. It was believed that the U-boat would then approach the vessel in order to sink it with a few well-directed shots, and thus save her own torpedoes.

Now the real drama would begin. The hydraulic platform of the Q-boat rose noiselessly on deck, the hidden gun-crew took careful aim at the U-boat, letting it come as close as possible. When it was near enough to satisfy the gunnery officer, the British ensign was suddenly hoisted and the U-boat sunk with one or two shots. The crew which had abandoned ship returned on board, and, if necessary, a torpedo-boat, in readiness below the horizon, was called by wireless should the Q-ship have been set on fire or been so seriously damaged during the first part of the encounter that it had to be taken in tow. If any members of the German submarine were rescued they were to be kept in isolation in a special prisoners-of-war camp. Letters which they wrote home to tell their families of their having survived were held

back so that Kiel might be kept in uncertainty about the fate of that particular submarine as long as possible.

It called for courage of the highest order to serve on these Q-ships, since the fight might not always go according to plan and might take quite another turn. Sometimes a U-boat commander would not economize with his torpedoes, but would sink the apparently abandoned ship at once. Or else the submarine would shell the ship from a distance and approach it only when it was burning or on the point of sinking. In either case, the hidden crew had to wait in smoke and heat without even a prospect of getting in a shot at the U-boat or of being saved. The real nature of their craft was not to be betrayed by them lest the submarine carry the news of this new danger at sea back to Germany. They were brave men, these Q-boat men. Of course, in war all branches of the services are exposed to danger, and Britain counted the damage to or even the loss of a Q-ship less than the destruction of a U-boat which might succeed in doing more harm.

What I could never find out was how many Q-boats were being fitted out to carry on the campaign in the following spring.

THE LITTLE HELPERS

As soon as nearly all the Great Powers were ranged against us, England tried also to induce the smaller States to join them in a common cause. England had no use for neutrals. Whoever was not for the Entente was against her, or might be soon. The affairs of the neutral nations were therefore watched with particular care and interest. Britain knew every hotbed of discontent and unrest, and exactly how to encourage any movement, at just the right moment when it would serve her purpose. Especial attention was paid to petty racial and nationalistic movements within the enemy States which might at any time prove advantageous since they carried the germs of disintegration. New, independent governments might be formed by secession either now or at some future date.

The Swiss mail disclosed many interesting details of these hidden processes, whose existence and inter-relations were entirely unknown to the world at large.

There was, quite at the beginning, the Greek internal conflict which could perhaps be so manipulated as to force that country into a war

it did not desire. Greece was neutral and had every intention of keeping out of this world conflagration. Venizelos, the Cretan, however—the king's enemy who had already brought political unrest into the country—felt that this was just the right time for him to seize the reins of power. Britain, quickly recognizing the opportunity to displace a pro-German dynasty, helped the usurper with money and supplies, and knew exactly how to render him dependent on her. A most generous donor of funds for this purpose was Sir Basil Zaharoff, the Greek millionaire, who had laid the foundation of his vast fortune as a representative of the Vickers works for South-east Europe before the War. He had become a naturalized British subject because all his interests were bound up with England. Later he was knighted. One of his daughters married a British naval officer, and the other became the wife of a Bourbon.

In Switzerland there were many rich and influential Greeks closely connected with British financial and political interests. They were carefully instructed as to how they should conduct a propaganda campaign in their own country to undermine the authority of King Constantine. Venizelos' opponent, Zaimis, was, however, once again elected Prime Minister, and did all in his power to steer the ship of state into less turbulent

waters ; but he could do nothing against the odds. In 1915 he had to give way to the demands of the Allies, who threatened Greece with a blockade which would have proved disastrous to that country with its open coastline and its dependence on imports from overseas.

The Allies looked upon Greece as a very useful base from which to undertake major operations. The unfortunate Gallipoli campaign was almost over by October 1915. The plan was now to retire the troops to Salonika, to increase their strength by two French and one English divisions, and about seventy thousand Serbians who had been completely refitted in Corfu. Once ready, this well-equipped army was to be employed against Bulgaria in a big scale campaign to overthrow this country and thus break the connection between Turkey and the Central Powers. In spite of their unwillingness, the Greeks were thus forced into the maelstrom of the War.

With Rumania the situation was quite different. Its relations with the Central Powers had altered considerably since the death of King Carol.

Within the very first weeks of the establishment of the new censorship branch in Liverpool several mailbags had been brought in containing registered letters from Rumania for America. Two examiners who understood Rumanian had to read all these

letters, translate any passages of interest, and submit them to the head of the department. There were in all more than fourteen hundred letters. The writers were nearly all members of the upper and educated classes, so that one could obtain a fairly accurate picture of conditions and the trend of opinion in that country. It left one in no doubt that Rumania would sooner or later enter the War on the side of the Allies, and that preliminary preparations were under way.

This impression did not remain long unconfirmed. An American chemical engineer, who was apparently well known in Mexico and the United States as a specialist in oil refinery systems and kindred questions, wrote to his brother that he would probably soon have to go via Russia to Rumania as he had received an order to study the conditions there with a view toward determining the best methods of destroying the oil wells and refineries if it became necessary. Rumania's entry into the War was expected to take place just after the harvest. One had to count, however, upon the Central Powers overrunning at once this new Ally, so that preparations had to be made to destroy the sources of supply of this precious liquid rather than let it fall into German hands, who needed it so badly.

In England they found it therefore difficult to

understand why Rumania's declaration of war at the end of August 1916 should have come as such a surprise to the Germans. It was, of course, a severe blow to their already hard-pressed and underfed armies. None the less, they attacked with their usual energy, and soon literally swept over the whole of the country. When Russia collapsed, Rumania, too, was finished. Whatever she reaped afterwards, she won no laurels in the War.

Another personality, in some traits not unlike the Cretan Venizelos, was the present President of the Czecho-Slovakian republic, Masaryk. He himself had moved to England at the beginning of the War. He had escaped from Austria just after the outbreak of hostilities and *in absentia* been condemned to death for high treason, but had found asylum in London. He devoted himself exclusively to his ambitious nationalistic plans with all the fanaticism of his race. He lectured at the university, wrote articles tipped with fire, and made propaganda for the future independence of the Czechs. In this he received ample financial support from well-to-do compatriots in the United States.

At first Masaryk had no recognized status, but lived very modestly in Hampstead, one of the residential sections of London. He was allowed to work on the practical realization of his scheme,

since his efforts certainly were undermining some of the already rickety pillars on which rested the might of the Austrian Empire. He was thus of some assistance to the Entente. Officially he was ignored for the time being. Grey, and later Balfour, were much too far-sighted and cautious statesmen to do anything to tie their hands. It was better to await the turn of events and not prematurely support this nationalist who, in case of some unexpected development, might later become an embarrassing person to have on their hands.

Within a few years the situation had changed very much in Masaryk's favour. He was then not merely tolerated, but became recognized by the Foreign Office as the coming man, and was treated as a personage who would one day assume the leadership of a nation, if ever a Czech Republic came into being.

Masaryk repaid his hosts by helping them to save a great amount of gold in bars. To secure it, England equipped an expedition directed seemingly against the Bolsheviki in the autumn of 1918. Czarist troops were refitted and armed and sent under British leadership through Siberia into the interior of Russia to unite there with a corps of Czech legionaries. The object of this little campaign, however, was not the restoration of the Czarist régime in Russia, as the Russian soldiers

had fondly imagined, but to take over a large quantity of minted and unminted gold that had fallen into the hands of the Czechs and which they alone could not transport anywhere. The gold was packed in hundreds of ammunition boxes. It was said there were in all 500 boxes of a hundred-weight each, worth more than three million pounds sterling. With the help of the Russians it was brought to Vladivostock, shipped on board a British cruiser, and taken to England via Canada.

That nation which to-day is probably the most dangerous and bitterest of all our smaller enemies was called into being by Germany's own incomprehensible folly and self-deception. The first news of the fatal intention of erecting a Polish kingdom, under the protection of Germany and Austria, I heard in the autumn of 1916. It was contained in a letter written by an American, who had been sent to the occupied Eastern provinces with the full consent of the German Government, to organize and run a system of relief among the Polish population, as America had already done in Belgium. The negotiations with our officials had, however, broken down and the American was on his way home again, stopping over in London. From there he wrote to his wife on the hopeless conditions in Germany, and how glad he was to get away from them. He had immediately got

into touch with Lord Eustace Percy of the Foreign Office, and had been able to tell him a great deal about his impressions of the political, economic, and military state of affairs in Central Europe, and especially of the morale of the German troops. He wrote very depreciatingly about the Polish scheme that had been hatched by the Germans. Nobody shared the German illusion that the Poles, overcome by gratitude, would at once put half a million men at the disposal of the Central Powers. Among the Allies there was no doubt at all that the Poles, fired by their own fervent patriotism and nationalistic ardour, would prove just as unreliable in fighting shoulder to shoulder with the Germans as had the Czechs who, when War broke out, had deserted in their thousands and joined the enemy.

When, in November, the proclamation of the new kingdom of Poland took place and was made known it became the general topic of discussion. People felt that this step, which they supposed was due to Hindenburg's and Ludendorff's policy, was one of the most important of the whole War and charged with the possibilities of serious consequences. Englishmen who knew European politics and were really familiar with affairs in Russia and Poland judged the situation with great accuracy. Russia, which was very tired of the War, would be aroused to fresh efforts such as the Allies

had desired for months, even though they sorely lacked arms and ammunition. Buchanan, the British Ambassador in Petrograd, would certainly take this opportunity to engineer the overthrowing of the Prime Minister, Stuermer. It seemed hard to foresee the reaction on other countries. But most would consider the formation of the kingdom of Poland and its association with Germany only as one more instance of egoistical German dynastic aggrandizement, and certainly not as an act of sound policy touched with a certain generosity. They would merely speculate about which Hohenzollern prince would receive the crown of Poland.

England recognized at once that with the creation of this new kingdom she was being provided with a new secret ally, who would certainly be of little practical use at the moment except as a fresh seat from which the pus of political disintegration might spread. It might become valuable later on, as Germany would gradually be worn down more and more.

All these minor Allies of the Entente were not worthy foes of Germany, but together they contributed a great deal to bring about her downfall. For the Allies they were merely the little helpers. They were given a generous share of the spoils, a considerable increase in power and territory, since, after peace, they were assigned to

the rôle of watchful lackeys, ever ready to hinder Germany's complete recovery. Beyond this they had no say in the peace conference. They had to confine themselves solely to matters affecting their direct interests.

THE FORSAKEN PEOPLE

HOWEVER loudly our enemies, conscious of their own share in allowing the dangerously charged political atmosphere to explode and bring about the World War, may talk about German Imperialism ; however skilfully they managed to give the appearance of premeditation to the concatenation of circumstances, stupidity, misunderstandings, suspicions, and the purblind actions of Germany's political rulers ; however much lack of insight and capacity one may ascribe to these rulers—there is one thing that our worst detractors can never gainsay : The German people, as such, went into this War with a clear conscience, clean hands, and clean hearts, because they had been called upon to defend their country and their honour. Their allied brother nation, their friends and neighbours, were in danger. How it all worked out that in challenging Austria the enemy really challenged Germany not even the rulers, much less the people, could see.

To Germans, the Triple Alliance was an heirloom of statesmanship left us by Bismarck and the old Emperor William I, the last creation of these great men of Germany's greatest period. It

seemed to the German people to be a firm rock on which their safety and security were based, and it seemed most natural to them that if one brother nation were threatened the others should come to its assistance. "In Nibelungen Faith."

The German people did only what was natural according to its simple code. It did not consider or try to find pretexts to back out of its obligations. One of its Allies was already at war, and the other would soon come to its assistance. This was the general belief of all Germany, and we turned expectant eyes toward Italy.

Italy did not join us. Strictly formally the *casus fœderis* did not apply. The treaty of alliance with Italy provided for her participation only in case of one of the other high contracting parties being attacked ! The enemy knew this only too well and outmatched in every way our own diplomacy. He had challenged us in such a way that we, to defend ourselves, were forced to seem the aggressors. Italy was free to act on this fine technical point of treaty interpretation, to ignore it and stand by her Allies. When, later, Italy turned against us, this was done under compulsion, and, in so far as Germany was concerned, unwillingly. Perhaps we might have acted differently under the same conditions. At any rate, Italy was right in the formal sense.

Seldom had nations so to rely on each other in

the truest sense of the word, were so welded together by destiny, as Germany and Austria, who were only later joined by Bulgaria and Turkey when the chances looked favourable that they might consolidate their own shaking dynasties if they fought beside a powerful ally. These four nations were surrounded on all sides by the unbreakable wall of their enemies, entirely cut off from all assistance, and without a friend in the world. Whom should they have trusted if not one another? Germany, by her very strength, was the heart and soul of this alliance. On this strength the others drew. The enmity of the whole world concentrated itself upon her. On whom should she rely absolutely if not on Austria, her real ally to whom she had kept faith so unconditionally?

Yet it was from this side that Germany was first betrayed. Thus not only a great rift was torn in what was noble in this War, which for all its horror had presented itself to Germans as a fight in a just cause, but all the internal defects of the Dual Monarchy became rapidly manifest. The Austrian Empire, which had only been held together for so long by the personality of the old Emperor Francis Joseph, was bound to disintegrate at his death under a successor who himself set the example of faithlessness.

It was midday on May 12, 1917. The work in the department was at its height, since by two

o'clock the outgoing American mail had to be finished in order to leave with that day's boat. A number of express letters sent in at the last moment had to be dealt with expeditiously to catch the mail. Such letters, if coming from reputable firms, would only be cursorily examined, since some of them weighed as much as two pounds each and contained merely shipping documents, statements of account, and similar commercial routine papers.

Shortly before the mails were closed an examiner brought me a private and personal letter addressed to the President of one of the greatest American banks, which he had found as an enclosure in that bank's ordinary bi-weekly package. The signature was illegible, but it was from someone who could only have got his information by being in close touch with Lloyd George. It contained the astonishing statement that Austria, through the intermediary of one of the Princes of Bourbon-Parma, had been in secret negotiations with one of the enemy powers, and was trying to arrange a separate peace with the Entente behind the backs of the other Central Powers. Germany as yet knew nothing of this. The contents of the letter were telephoned at once to London, although the authorities there certainly knew all about the matter.

In the course of the next few days I had the

luck to be able to forward the news by word of mouth to a pro-German address in Madrid. Whether the message was held back there or was intercepted or lost in being relayed to Germany it is impossible to determine now. The fact is that it was long before Germany learnt of this betrayal. Nor did anything more come through the Liverpool censorship. Months later the *Manchester Guardian* published a statement that in the spring Austria had secretly submitted peace proposals, but that Balfour had refused to consider them. The enemy did not bother much about Austria, whom they had never feared. They wanted to smash us; the other would fall any way. But it had been a useful indication of where the rot in the alliance of the Central Powers had set in, and the Entente knew it had victory in the hollow of its hand.

It was an inner turning-point of the War which could be felt on both sides. That monster drama, as it played itself out through the years, brought forth unbelievable manifestations of hate and envy, strength, cunning, sacrifice, slander, heroism. There was enmity in the world, but with all its train of suffering and sordidness a certain greatness had nevertheless seemed to touch it with its magic.

But now into the relations of men and nations there had crept a new, diseased spirit, the poison of mistrust among friends and the bitterness of

ingratitude. What now came to light was a deep-seated decay, the forerunner of disintegration. Nibelungen faith? How did these present rulers compare with the heroes of that saga of personal loyalty? Hagen, the murderer, would never have been guilty of such baseness; the wild proud Hun King Etzel would have died rather than betray his own people. Karl, the Emperor, the arrogant and decadent heir of an ancient ruling family, Karl and his House did not hesitate to stoop to it. Did it secretly behind the back of his ally, who was bleeding to death in this cause, for the sake of some material advantage. *Sauve qui peut*. Let Germany go to ruin provided he could find a way out. All nobility had vanished from this great drama; all security, trust, and belief. The most ignorant private must have felt it. The German people, the German Army, would have held out to the bitter end, to victory or honourable defeat. But how were our brave troops to concentrate upon resistance to the attacks of the enemy with the feeling in their minds that something was going on behind their backs? Rot and discouragement spread fast. It offered a splendid soil for the British propaganda that was ceaselessly being distributed behind the front for the promises of the millennium coming from the East. Could one demand of ordinary men a greater tenacity, a stronger will to hold out,

a greater loyalty, than of their Emperors? Should their code of honour be severer? It was a terrible example Hapsburg had set.

On a visit to London in September 1917 I heard that discontent was spreading among the naval ratings at Kiel. It seemed hardly credible that enemy propaganda should have so seriously affected the proverbial German discipline. Still it was known that hunger is a powerful resolvent of morale, and how certain unripe political leaders in Germany were actually helping to undermine the strength of the people and in their blindness playing into the hands of the enemy. *The Times* and other English papers often published extracts of the speeches or articles of these men in Germany.

In December the news came through that Jerusalem had fallen. There was great rejoicing in England. It looked like the beginning of Turkey's end.

Again and again the German people and Army found strength. Their faith in their honoured commander-in-chief still kept Army and home together. And there was still a shimmer of hope of a reasonably bearable peace so long as the four Powers held together. Germany had long ago ceased to expect anything more from her Allies than resistance in the defence of their own frontiers. The positive work of repeated attacks had been almost entirely left to the Germans.

Everywhere Germany had to send troops to be the backbone of local armies and officers to organize the defence. Of all this England was well informed.

After the great spring offensive of 1918, which had once more aroused the hopes of the people in Germany only to be dissipated shortly afterwards, one could feel a great reaction setting in. From documents that came regularly for the information of the Liverpool censorship one could see that strikes and discontent were on the increase at home, disruption and decomposition menacing the country. The German people began to despair and to break down physically from the effects of the blockade, and in spirit from the terrible disappointments of the last few months.

Still, according to expert military opinion in England, it was believed that the Central Powers would hold out until the following year. As yet the German Army stood its ground. The lines were certainly thinner, and there had been withdrawals here and there to more suitable defensive positions, but still they were a living wall about the frontiers, and held the enemy in check.

I shall never forget an observation a staff officer made in July 1918. It was in the club, and six of us had sat down to dinner. As was natural, talk revolved about the War, and the officer declared that recently all interest had so much been

concentrated on the Western Front that the events in the East had not received adequate attention. The break usually occurred just where it was least expected. "A chain is as strong as its weakest link," he said. The logic was crushing in its simplicity. All the little items that I had seen in confidential documents in the last few months rose before my eyes : the insufficient rations issued to the Turkish troops, the hopeless muddle in Bulgaria, where in places there was an abundance of food but no means of distribution and no proper lines of communication between the inland and the front at the periphery.

On August 24, a Saturday, at about two o'clock in the afternoon, one of the last of the letters of a batch of mail was brought to me. It contained merely the copy of another letter without signature or date, and was addressed to a private person in New York, whom I identified later as one of the junior partners of the great banking house of J. P. Morgan & Co. It told of a secret conference which had been held on August 13 at the Emperor's headquarters in Spa, at which Hindenburg, Ludendorff, the Crown Prince, and the Chancellor had been present. They had reported that the spring offensive had been a failure, and that Germany's last reserves were exhausted. At a second meeting on the following day Emperor Karl, Count Burian, and

General von Arz had joined them and stated that Austria could not carry on any longer, and that they would sue for peace.

The letter was stopped and the information telephoned to London. This again was only a matter of form, for the Foreign Office would certainly know all about it already.

The separate Austrian offer of peace was indeed published soon afterwards, but comparatively little notice was taken of it. The rapidly spreading breakdown of the morale in Germany was of greater importance.

The links of the chain of the Central Powers were rapidly beginning to fall apart. On September 19 an officer who had just come back from Salonika wrote to his brother in Ireland that for some time the Bulgarian high command had been acting in conjunction with General Franchet d'Esperey, the French Commander-in-Chief in Macedonia, and that the surrender of Bulgaria was merely a question of days.

We knew that Czar Ferdinand and his son, the present King Boris, as well as the commanders of the Turkish armies, were brave, faithful, and appreciated that their only hope lay in absolute loyalty to each other. But the Bulgarian masses, who had only been an independent nation for a few years, as yet unorganized, torn by party strife, unschooled in war or peace, and still weakened by

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the effects of a former war, could not hold out any longer. The troops had had enough of fighting ; they wanted to get home to their families, and scattered like children. On September 29, 1918, Bulgaria accepted the armistice conditions of the Entente. Thus Turkey, the bulk of whose decimated army—ravaged by disease and want—was in Syria, finding herself now with her whole European frontier open to the enemy, was also soon forced to follow suit.

A tense subdued excitement coursed through the whole of England. It grew and grew. The thought of a sudden end of the War hung in the air. Each day increased the tension. Yet, even so, people were not prepared for the mad tempo of the conclusion.

On October 4, a Friday, about half an hour before midnight, I was returning with an American officer to the flat we shared. While we were still chatting for a few moments before turning in, the telephone rang, and a report came through that according to news received in London Germany has asked for an armistice on the lines of President Wilson's proposals. For the moment that was all we could learn. Sleep was out of question. We sat up for hours discussing the possibilities of the situation. Next morning the news was confirmed in the censorship, and on the following day the papers were full of it. The German offer was

based upon the fourteen points which implied fair conditions of peace. But the enemy wanted surrender.

Now almost every second day brought a confidential letter to the banker in New York already mentioned. The writer must have had wonderful connections, for he knew everything that was going on in London and Paris. Differences of opinion among the leading statesmen began to manifest themselves. Lloyd George and Bonar Law, in agreement with Clemenceau, had cabled to Wilson that there could be no thought of an armistice until Germany had evacuated all the occupied areas. Lloyd George was clearly very annoyed that Wilson should have replied to Germany's Note before consulting with the Allies, and Balfour had sent Wilson a very diplomatic but firm suggestion to that effect. Nor did England at all agree with Wilson's second "point", which affected the freedom of the seas. Clemenceau did not propose to take any notice of Wilson's answer, since no mention was made in it of the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine.

The subsequent letters were equally interesting. They told that England and France had decided to allow Belgium to attend the ensuing negotiations only when matters affecting Belgian interests were to be dealt with. Wilson was to be invited to come to Europe to personally take a part in the

discussions. By the middle of October feeling against Wilson's usurpation of negotiatory privileges had assumed serious proportions, and Britain began to fear that its interests and prestige might become affected.

The tension in England grew and grew. Everyone waited feverishly for morsels of news. When would the end come, the end of these terrible years? When? Events now chased each other in a bewildering succession. On October 27 Austria demanded an armistice, which was refused. On the 30th an armistice was made between Turkey and the Entente. On the same day the Czech republic was proclaimed in Prague, and on the 31st the Hungarian independence in Budapest.

Then, on November 3, followed the armistice with Austria which had been refused at first, and, two days later, after weeks of fruitless exchanges of cabled notes, Wilson informed the Germans that their request for an armistice must be addressed to Marshal Foch.

Germany now stood alone. During these fateful days, while our exhausted armies still fought bravely, a mutiny had broken out in Kiel among the ratings, which started other disturbances in the country. It was, indeed, the beginning of the end. A saying still current in Germany, "The home stabbed the army in the back", was coined in those autumn days. But the mutineers in Kiel and the

demagogues and rioters in Berlin were not the German nation ! And if the leaders had not lost their heads at this critical moment more bearable terms might perhaps have been secured. But the spirit of 1914, "One for all and all for one", had been broken.

It became quickly known that Marshal Foch had sent the terms of the armistice to the German Government and had demanded that they be accepted or refused by November 11. What these terms were no one knew—only that they were extremely severe. The wildest rumours circulated. On November 9 a telephone message from London stated that the German Emperor had abdicated and fled to Holland. Fled ? The idea seemed absurd and was at first not believed even by the British.

On the Sunday evening we all waited in the club for news. An American officer who had a friend in the Embassy in London had been promised to be rung up if anything transpired. We waited the whole evening, but in vain. On the Monday morning I went early with —, the head of the censorship in Liverpool, to the office in order to telephone to London for news. Even headquarters could not tell us anything. They promised to ring us up again at about nine o'clock. But it was not until a few minutes before eleven that we were informed the armistice had

been signed at 5 a.m. that morning, and would come into force as from eleven o'clock. The reaction set in. A great fatigue seemed suddenly to overwhelm me. The War was over !

I stood at the window of the office and gazed unseeingly upon the little church square below. The events of the last four years seemed to race through one's mind—untold sacrifices, untold misery. And now it was all over.

In the street below everything seemed to go its old way. The clock in the church tower struck eleven. A girl slipped out of a shop and was shortly followed by another. Suddenly people streamed from every door. I turned round and saw how excited the department had become. I told them that work was over for the day and that the whole mail not yet touched should go on uncensored. As I went home, half an hour later, the streets and squares were black with people rejoicing. They danced and sang and shouted and cheered, in relief of the burden that had lain so long on their minds and hearts. The shriek of the sirens on the ships tore through the din, and above it as a canopy of sound one heard the majestic tolling of the church bells.

I was glad to get away from it all. That evening I had to attend a dinner of celebration at the club. The armistice terms were now known, and there were still many who thought them too

light. On the following day we were informed that the censorship was to remain in force for the present without changes in the procedure.

In England itself the tremendous relief from the terrific pressure of the war years manifested itself in every phase of life. Rationing ceased, people made plans for the future, money circulated freely.

The expectation that soon after fulfilling the armistice conditions, which so completely put our country at the mercy of the enemy and had eliminated every possibility of further resistance, the blockade would be lifted proved illusory. So the systematic starving out of the German people went on.

In the letters that still regularly continued to go to the American banker, it was reported that in the armistice terms a loosening of the blockade had been expressly promised, but that Foch had successfully prevented the promise being fulfilled. It was assumed that vast French business interests were responsible for this breach of agreement.

Germany, once so strong—now broken in spirit, in the throes of bitter internal strife, defenceless and without friends, deserted by its own rulers—could it expect that its enemies alone should keep faith?

THE MIGHTY CONQUERORS

ON January 18, 1919, there began in Paris the so-called Peace Conference. In spite of all the previous emphatic assurances of Wilson as to an "open diplomacy" to usher in a new era of understanding between nations, nothing was made public of what was taking place in Paris. Nor was it here a case of peace negotiations in the usual sense of the word. For the defeated were excluded from participation. The four great victor Powers England, America, France, and Italy, simply sat in council to deliberate on the terms they were going to impose on us.

Since the interesting reports that had come through before the armistice had ceased, I caused for a time all letters mentioning particulars of the Peace Conference to be brought to me for personal inspection, and soon found a fresh source of information that could hardly have been bettered. There were letters passing through the department from time to time addressed to a personage in New York who was already known as one of Wilson's political opponents. They always came as enclosures in bank correspondence. The writer seemed well informed on what was going on in

Paris and understood at the same time how to make his letters read like a series of vividly written sketches. According to him personal contact with the American President had proved a disappointment to the great European statesmen. Co-operation with him along the lines of a pre-determined European policy seemed hopeless. He lacked all sense of practical politics, but was obsessed by a vague idealism and an *idée fixe*, the League of Nations. It was hard to know what to do with him, till at last Lloyd George, Balfour, and Clemenceau decided that the best way out of their difficulty would be to break in, groom and saddle his hobby-horse—and let him ride it, while they attended to the practical business of the conference.

It was easy enough to see that Wilson's ideas of a settlement did not at all tally with the plans of the European victors. His interpretation of "Freedom of the Seas", for instance, was to the effect that America and England should control them as equals, with equal rights. Every member of the League should have the same voting power on all questions—so that Serbia's would have carried equal weight with that of France, or Poland's voice on naval matters the same as that of England! Wilson wanted to give the mandates over the German colonies to one of the small States, and was, above all, resolved that the victors

should renounce all indemnities. To the Allies this last idea was, of all, the most fantastic. On the other hand, Wilson, because of some purely personal annoyance with Japan, summarily demanded of England the annulment of a treaty by which she had given the Japanese all the islands in the Pacific north of the equator which they had occupied in the course of the War.

The next letter from the same writer came through about a fortnight later, and dealt solely with the blockade and its correlated questions, because they threatened to become of supreme importance to American business interests. To provision their armies, the Allies had placed huge advance orders for the supply of meats and fats, amounting to hundreds of thousands of tons, in the United States. Now, however, as a result of the unexpectedly early end to hostilities, these purchases were nearly all being cancelled. American firms were therefore placed in a difficult position, and forced to find quickly other markets for supplies actually on hand or in process of production, either to Neutrals or the famished Central Powers. If the Allies persisted in their resolve to postpone still further the promised termination of the blockade, America would find herself threatened with a catastrophal drop in prices, bringing to inevitable ruin the thousands

of farmers and manufacturers already committed to the production of these food supplies.

One received more and more the impression that the Peace Conference might drag on interminably. Month after month went by. It was March already. The situation in Paris seemed still one of confusion. Obviously the Allies could not agree upon anything, and their resolutions wavered this way and that. Added to it all came their real anxiety at the success of the Russian revolutionaries, who seemed definitely to have gained the upper hand. For a time a scheme was seriously considered of arming Russian prisoners of war in Germany and leading them against the Bolsheviks, under the command of British and French officers. Marshal Foch was also eager to send the numerous Polish troops still in France under General Haller, via Danzig, against Russia. The Allies feared Bolshevism—above all that it might spread to Germany. It was this nightmare which weighed on all of them, since if Germany, driven to desperation, were to embrace this Eastern heresy, her enemies would not only be bereft of the spoils of victory, but might even themselves be swept away into revolution and anarchy. England, keeping a cool head, saw things more objectively than France—still blinded by her mad thirst for revenge—and was moved by this consideration to urge the avoidance of any too drastic

military measures against Germany. Her intention was to employ only ten infantry battalions, two regiments of cavalry, and four battalions of coloured troops for the occupation of German territory. These military questions seemed to be a constant cause of discord among the victors.

Another difficult problem that engaged the conference was the question whether the Austrian ex-Emperor Karl should be allowed to leave his Swiss refuge, none of the Allied countries being willing to bind itself in clear straightforward terms not to demand his extradition.

On matters pertaining to annexations agreement was more quickly reached. There was so much there to be annexed ! France was to be given Syria, and England all our African colonies, as well as Palestine, Mesopotamia, and the islands in the Pacific which she had occupied south of the equator. But this settlement did not suit Wilson. On the other hand, he refused to order the occupation of Constantinople and Armenia by two strong American divisions, but obstinately insisted on giving Smyrna to the Greeks, without so much as intending to inform Turkey or Italy of his decision.

It was a Babel of aspirations and opinions, although in reality there were only four principal delegates to the conference : Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau and Orlando. Representatives of the other victor States were only consulted from time

to time at the sittings when the problems of their countries came up for discussion.

The longer the Peace Conference lasted the more inharmonious it became. Toward the end the difficulties in Paris were increased by all sorts of minor events in the world outside. From India came the news that Afghanistan had declared a "Holy War" on England ; then Wilson considered his feelings hurt by Italy's attitude, and the touchy President could only with difficulty be dissuaded from venting his personal anger by sending the American Fleet to the Mediterranean as a demonstration. It needed all of Balfour's tact and skill to prevent his airing his grievances about the alleged Italian intrigues against him in the public Press.

The natural consequences of these differences among the Allies were a postponement to the eleventh hour of every final decision. At last, on May 7, the peace conditions were handed to our delegates. Until noon of that day not one of the four real authors had had a complete copy of the document !

Bit by bit the items of these peace terms reached the Press. Their severity surpassed all expectations. Clemenceau's intention of enslaving us for years and years was apparent in every line. Yet, in spite of this, there could still be voices heard that we were being let down far too lightly.

Now the centre of interest shifted to the question : Will the Germans accept? And, if they refuse, will the Allies occupy large sections of German territory? The English newspapers contained many reports of a growing German resistance to the acceptance of the ignominious terms. But a very shrewd American officer, who knew the economic conditions prevailing in Germany, declared that the Germans were in no position to resist. There would be no need of military coercion. The German people were literally starving, and simply could not much longer withstand a prolongation of the blockade.

The reports about events in Paris continued to be packed with interesting items—important and petty. Wilson was against a plebiscite in Upper Silesia. He feared that it would go in Germany's favour and might cost him, at the next American election, the votes of two and a half million Poles living in the States. Only when Lloyd George pointed out to him that the principle of self-determination of peoples was enunciated in one of his very own fourteen points was it possible to make him change his mind. The Poles refused to let Russian prisoners of war pass through Polish territory on their return to Russia, and Orlando rejected the suggestion to submit the question of Fiume's future to the decision of the League of Nations. Even on the question of occupying

German territory no final decision had yet been arrived at, since the British General Staff was against the proposed fifteen years, and considered two years amply sufficient, which the French naturally denied.

The crux of many letters now passing through the censorship was the fear in leading circles that the Germans would not accept the conditions, but would simply declare : "Do as you please ! We refuse to sign our own sentence of enslavement." A fiasco of the Peace Conference could very well produce in every country such a reaction of public opinion as might easily lead to milder terms being imposed. But the Germans did not perceive this possibility. Their good star had gone down. Worn out and confused, without direction or leadership, they had become the playthings of revolutionaries who, impressed by their own temporary importance and authority, had lost all sense of the dignity and honour of their country. The better element of our people had become too powerless politically to carry any weight against the masses. For four years death had taken its toll of all our best, in cottage and mansion. Their heirs, the heirs to old strength and faith, were only beginning to grow to manhood. That "faithful Eckart", Hindenburg, who had stuck to his post to the very end, and who later, at a moment of deepest need, was called on by the German people

with exceptional unanimity to lead them, stood pushed aside in the background, aloof from the tragic confusion of the minute. The "know-alls", the carping critics of all that had been, who themselves proved so disastrously incompetent, were at the helm. So they accepted the harsh terms of peace, and signed the Treaty of Versailles.

On the day of its signature the censorship, too, was to cease. Our department had long been in process of demobilization. On the signing of the armistice measures had been quietly taken to prepare its closing, and the heads of departments had been consulted as to what had best be done with the hundreds of thousands of letters held back by the authorities in the course of the past years. Later the Government decided that all letters which did not actually injure present British interests were to be sent on to their original destination.

The first official to leave our department was an elderly colleague who had worked with us since 1915. I willingly gave my consent to a project of getting up a subscription to purchase a small gift to be presented to him as a remembrance. It was the day before Christmas 1918. The little ceremony, which obviously had greatly pleased him, was just over, and I was about to return to my desk, when the others held me back and, to my horror, proceeded to give me, too, a token, as a souvenir of this last Christmas in the censorship.

It was one of those situations which have to be faced quietly, although every drop of blood in one's veins protests that silence is impossible. And yet—in spite of the deep embarrassment of which I alone among them was conscious—I felt sincerely grateful and profoundly touched. For, personally, all these people at whose sides I had worked for years were not enemies but dear friends, and when I thanked them for their kindness and their gift—which I accepted, since accept I must—I did it with all my heart. Only years later, when I could tell my reason for having done so, did I send it back.

These Christmas days of 1918 passed also. I remembered another Christmas week which, four years before, had seemed to me the summit of desolation. Now the Christmas message was realized—there was peace on earth ; but it was a hollow peace.

To a number of our examiners the demobilization of the censorship meant unemployment and perhaps temporary economic difficulties. The arrival of an American officer who came to Liverpool to engage some of our staff for work in France, where they would find employment in the many offices now opened for a speedy winding up of the American camps, was, therefore, hailed with delight. It was announced that bookkeeping and a knowledge of banking would be required, and

that an examination of the candidates would precede their engagement. This news prevented at first many of our ladies from applying. But it was soon discovered that the work would principally be one of accurately checking pay sheets and converting francs into dollars and dollars into francs at the current rate of exchange. So we quickly arranged classes in the office, and all our ladies who had now applied passed the examination. As I afterwards learned, they were given a very good time in France, had good pay, and were taken every fortnight on charabanc rides through the French provinces to get a sight of the beauties of the country.

I, too, had been offered a suitable post, which I should have been only too glad to accept in the hope of getting into Germany via one of the neutral States. But here my lack of a passport stood in the way. The passport regulations were still as stringent as ever. Even one of our ladies, born in Australia, but who from her earliest childhood had lived with relatives in the neighbourhood of Liverpool, had only with the greatest difficulty succeeded in getting an endorsement from the office of the Australian High Commissioner in London, by means of which she received the passport that she needed.

By June 1, 1919, the staff of the censorship had been reduced to a nominal strength. But

WAR DEPARTMENT.**Certificate of Service in Civil Appointment.**

Name **Mr. J.C. Silber**

Nature of employment **Assistant Censor, Postal Censorship**

Employed { From **12.10.14.**
To **21.6.19.**

Cause of leaving **Demobilisation of the Postal Censorship**

Conduct **Exemplary**

Clerical abilities **A very able man: good linguist, thorough and competent.**


for Secretary of the War Office.

WAR OFFICE.
8.7.19.

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every preparation had been made at once to re-establish our department at its full strength in the unlikely event of the Germans refusing to sign the treaty.

At headquarters in London, even after the demobilization of the censorship, a small staff was kept for a time to deal with all enquiries about undelivered registered letters. In the middle of June I sent to headquarters the chief bookkeeper of our department, who was thoroughly conversant with all the routine of checking and control, armed with the necessary ledgers, and began, in Liverpool, to collect the confidential papers and documents handed out against a receipt to all censorship officials on their engagement, and the presence of which had been checked by weekly inspections. All these papers, together with the very extensive card-index containing details of suspected firms, all the carefully prepared data of previous years, were stowed away in huge sacks, sealed, and despatched by the post office direct to Manchester, where such confidential material no longer required was collected from all Government offices to be destroyed according to regulations. The material from our department alone filled over thirty sacks. It was hardest of all to give up the two complete sets of the *Who's Who*. Each set ran into twenty-seven folio volumes, of which every volume weighed two to three pounds.

On Friday, June 27, 1919, the last letters were censored. Next day—the day on which the Treaty of Versailles was due for signature—the staff only came to the office for an hour, to bid each other good-bye and to receive their certificates of service. At eleven o'clock there appeared an official from the Office of Works, to whom I handed over the furniture and equipment and the keys of the safe. The War was over.

FATHERLAND

FROM the moment that I knew that the War was over I could hardly await the hour to leave England. It seemed impossible to go on playing the part that I had played for the last four years another minute. At Christmas 1918 a friend of mine was of the opinion that peace would be declared within two months at the very latest. The present restrictions would then be relaxed, I assumed, and I could leave without much trouble. Perhaps I should be home for Easter!

But the months came and went and one began to realize that a certain time must elapse after the official termination of the War before normal pre-War conditions of travel to the Continent would be re-established. One simply had to wait and wait for this time or till some lucky chance should open the gate. But I did not dream that the years of my sojourn in England would be more than doubled before I should be able to get out of the island trap I had chosen to enter.

On the last day of May 1919 I received quite unexpected news from the captain of the ship with whom I had tried to leave England nearly two years

before. At that time I had paid him half of the sum agreed upon, and now he was back in a British port, and sent me a message after ascertaining that I was still in England. I went to see him, and we spoke of the means now open to him, under present conditions, to take me to a neutral country without a passport. There was still a great difficulty in getting on board unseen. The ship was not alongside a quay, but at anchor in midstream, like many other neutral vessels, and the harbour control was as strict as ever. The captain was willing to help me provided he did not get into any trouble with the owners or the authorities. He thought he could guarantee that the pilot would not get to hear about a stowaway. He would see to it that a rope-ladder would be hanging down 'midships on starboard, and from it I could easily reach a safe hiding-place. But how to get aboard was entirely my own affair. The distance between ship and shore was about one hundred and fifty yards ; this I should have to swim, but that was nothing.

When I went again to the port where he was lying to survey the ground I found one side of the shore was covered with sheds and warehouses, the yards of which were, of course, walled off from the streets. Easy access to the water was thus blocked. A distance down-stream, however, there was a narrow lane with a little landing-stage used

by men rowing across from the other side of the river. The distance to the ship amidstream was thus increased to about five hundred yards. I made all arrangements to leave Liverpool. In the middle of June I heard that the ship was ready to put to sea the following Monday. I went down to the port on Sunday, arriving there in the early evening, went to a cinema to pass the time, and was glad when I came out to find it was raining slightly. That part of the river would be in darkness, and I should probably meet very few people on the street running parallel to the river. At a quarter-past twelve I was at the landing-stage and got into the water. Now I found how ill I really was. After a few strokes I felt my strength ebbing away fast. The current swept me along and only with the greatest difficulty did I manage to struggle back to the shore.

In the States we had been keen on all kinds of sport. It had been my custom occasionally, when out sailing, to jump overboard fully dressed, so as to give me the feeling of confidence that, in case of an accident, I should be able to keep my head above water for at least half an hour. Temperature—that is within reason—made little difference in those days. The distance from shore to steamer, especially at this time of year, would have seemed like child's play to me then. But in the last two years my physical condition had greatly deteriorated. Nature

revenged herself. For the second time the rescuing ship departed without me.

I was angry with myself for despairing over this last failure. Still, I firmly believed that normal conditions would soon prevail again, and that travelling would be as free as ever before the War. That was my hope. And with the relief from the constant tension and a few weeks of rest I thought physical recovery, too, would come.

When the censorship was closed I went to live on a small farm in Somerset. It was a charmingly quiet place with a beautiful park on one side and on the other a pleasant brook. Here, in absolute peace, I wanted to work on the arrangement of all the material that I had collected. Although it was summer I had fires burning in my sitting-room all morning and evening. The cool of the early hours and of the evening provided a good excuse. There I burnt everything that had become obsolete, only keeping what might be useful to the German Government when at last I would get home.

From my writing-table I could see down a lane which led from the back of the house over a small wooden bridge to the main road. One morning, as I had spread all my negatives about me, I suddenly saw a police-sergeant and two men coming down this path toward the house. In all the weeks I had been here I had never seen a constable, and

now there were three all at once. I had got into touch with my relations in Silesia some time previously, after I had made certain that the censorship was definitely abolished. It suddenly occurred to me that perhaps last controls of letters to Germany were still being made, and that one of mine had thus been found. This visit could therefore only be for me. I quickly threw everything round me into the fire. It blazed up. The police had now disappeared, for they had to go round the house to reach the front door. I heard the opening of the front door, the murmur of voices, and shortly after this there was a knock at my door. The sergeant and one constable came in—and asked me very politely whether I would not buy some tickets for a gymkhana for the benefit of the widows and orphans of the police who had fallen during the War. I gladly took four tickets, and they thanked me heartily and went off. I sat down again at my desk, smoking one cigarette after another, and staring at the heap of ashes in the grate which were all that was left of my material.

I could not remain too long in a country place. It was impossible to avoid meeting people, and I did not want to make new acquaintances. Besides, it was in London that one would best hear of opportunities to leave. Moreover, my financial resources, which at the beginning of the War had seemed ample to defray all possible expenses that

might arise, were now almost exhausted. If I could not leave soon, I would have to find some kind of freelance work that would not involve fresh conflicts of spirit. So I went to London.

In the meantime, diplomatic relations between Germany and England had been resumed, and a Legation been established in London. Only later did the Minister at its head become Ambassador to the Court of St. James. I called there and, after my identity was established, was courteously received. I had to realize, however, that they could not do anything at the present to help me to leave. The passport control was as rigorous as ever. All British subjects (and therefore also French-Canadians) only needed a British passport if they wished to leave the country. For foreigners of allied or neutral countries a passport was also sufficient, since it included a *permis de séjour*. Such passports might be issued in England by the accredited representatives of these countries. But these rights had not yet been accorded to the ministers or ambassadors of the Central Powers. Any passport issued by them would not be valid for *leaving* England. By right only those Germans could be in England who had received express permission to remain when all the interned civilians had been sent back to Germany after the declaration of peace. If such favoured Germans

wished to leave—which they were quite free to do—they had to produce a special permit from the police on going aboard ship.

It was evidence that they had not surreptitiously stayed in England, but that their presence was known. At that time, therefore, a German could leave British shores only under the conditions described above, or if, for some good and sufficient reason, he had come to England *since* the cessation of hostilities. Such ex-enemy aliens had their passports visaed on the Continent, and these visas also enabled them to leave again. So there was nothing to be done but to await a relaxation of these stringent regulations.

It was inadvisable to be seen too often at the Embassy. I knew that the building was being unobtrusively watched. This was done, perhaps, to see if any German might be found who had come to or had remained in England without permission. Though the members of the Embassy and their staff were immune, this did not apply to their visitors. And once I was actually addressed in German by a man as I came down the steps. He began to beg, and seemed to have a long story to tell me. Since, however, he looked more like some detective or police agent I refused to be drawn into conversation.

The first “peace Christmas” was a gloomy festival indeed, although I received two letters

from home, and even a tiny spray of a Christmas tree.

“But the next Christmas,” I thought, “I’m certain to be home by then!”

In the beginning of 1920 I succeeded in getting a post as scenario-writer in a big, newly established film company. Before the War this industry had already interested me, although then it was still in its infancy. The drawback—a tremendous one in film work—was that I had to be always on my guard to avoid every publicity.

The year came to an end. I had not been able to get home in spite of every effort. Now and again German cargo-boats would come to London, or other ports, but their comings and goings were always sharply watched. A detective would remain on board till such boats sailed. He made sure that only the captain, and, at most, the chief mate, left the ship, and that no unauthorized person would come and remain aboard. And another attempt at reaching a boat by swimming was out of question.

In 1921 there was a slump in the British film industry, partly because the quality of its output did not meet the requirements of the public and partly because the climatic conditions were unfavourable for photographing exteriors. One could never rely on having good light. The company for which I wrote and several others failed. I

received some excellent offers to go abroad—to America, Italy and France—but I had to refuse them all ; I could not get away.

There followed a time of ever-increasing hardship. A heart disease, which had long ago begun to give me trouble, grew rapidly worse and hampered me physically for several years. I could not have escaped just then if it involved any physical exertion, even though I had found an opportunity to do so. The fact that I did manage to keep going at all is entirely due to English friends, whose kindness was beyond all praise and whose debtor I shall always remain.

Not till the summer of 1924 did the relaxation of restrictions of travel present opportunities to leave England. In order to revive the tourist-traffic to Belgian seaside resorts permission was granted to British subjects to make week-end trips to Ostend without passports. I was too ill during the first summer to take advantage of this opportunity, but I knew that next year I should do it. A spark of hope is the best of all physicians.

On the day before Whit-Sunday, 1925, I left England with only a small suitcase. A friend of mine, a neutral, who therefore enjoyed perfect freedom of travel, had taken my kit to Holland a few days before. We had arranged to have him

meet me with a car at a certain spot on the Dutch side of the Belgian frontier.

It seemed very strange to go on board a boat without any questions. Two detectives were near the gangplank watching the passengers go aboard. The last few minutes were charged with suspense. Should I really manage to leave unchallenged? At last the boat began to move.

Next day I went by train from Ostend to the little Belgian frontier town, Esschen, at the Dutch-Belgian frontier, and from there safely reached Dutch territory. At eleven that night I was at the appointed place but no car was in sight. What did it matter—I was free at last, and so I waited.

At about three in the morning, just as it was beginning to get light, I heard a car coming. It stopped and my friend and I were soon on the way to the Hague, where my passport awaited me at the German Legation.

That same evening I crossed the German frontier. Next morning, when I woke, the train was just outside Berlin. It was glorious to lean out of the window and to see the tree-lined streets, so different from those of London.

At last I was at home and could look about me. No longer a proud Germany, such as it had been eleven years previously. An impoverished land, with a people still suffering in body and mind.

288 THE INVISIBLE WEAPONS

But he who lives here and feels its heart-beat knows that one day it will recover again to take its rightful place among the nations, and I am proud to belong to it.

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